

THE TALKING MACHINE REVIEW

INTERNATIONAL

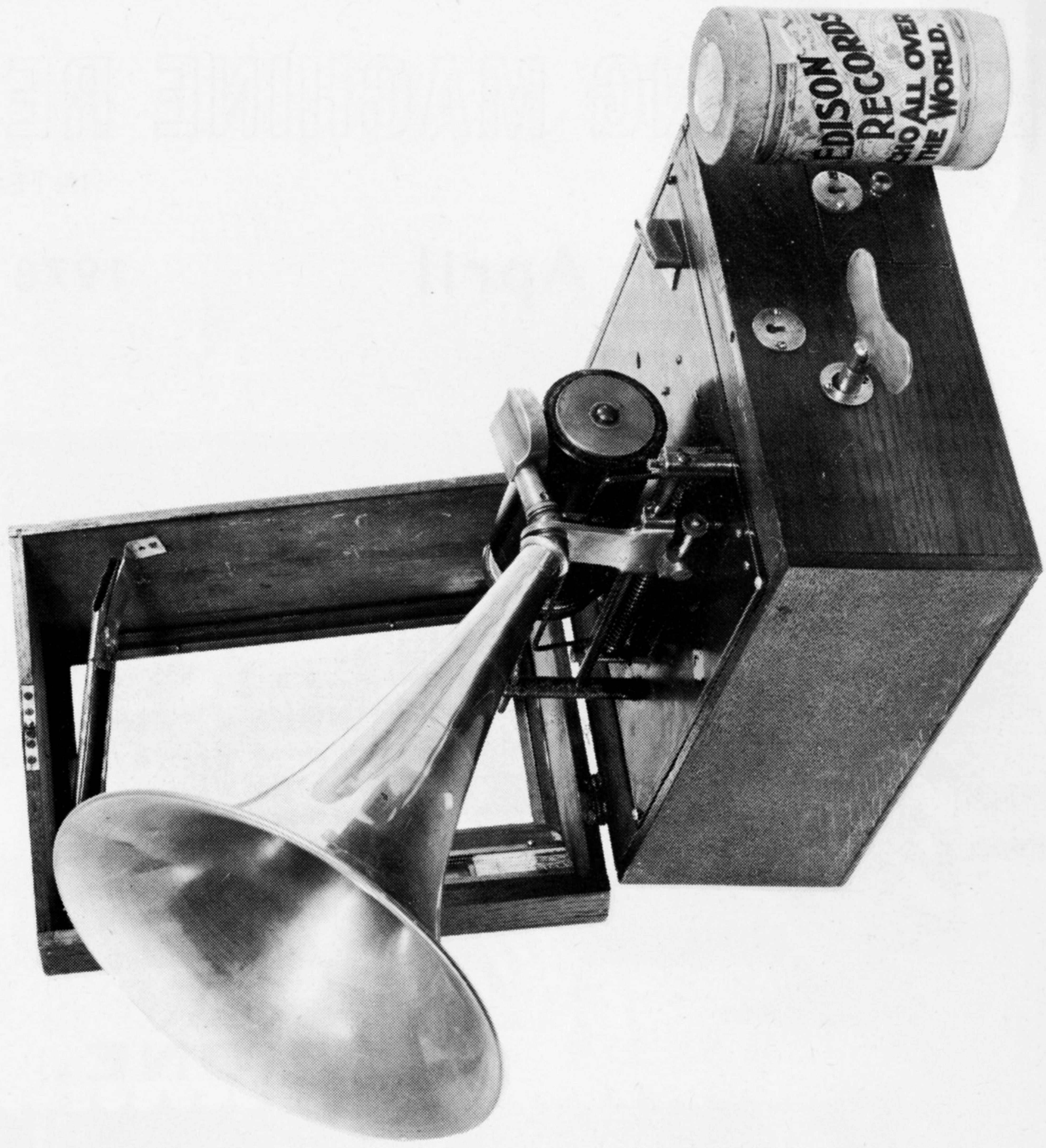
No 51

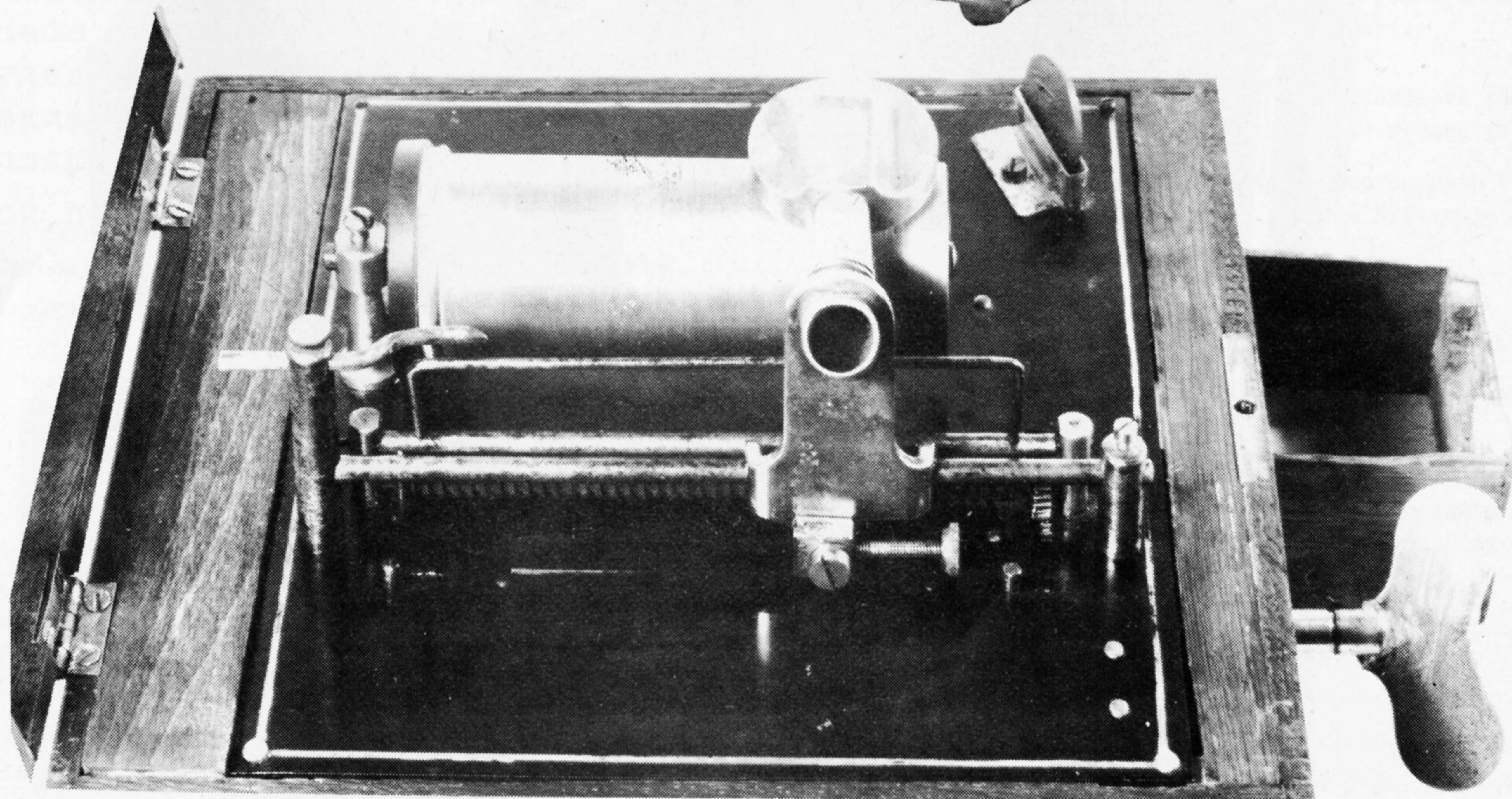
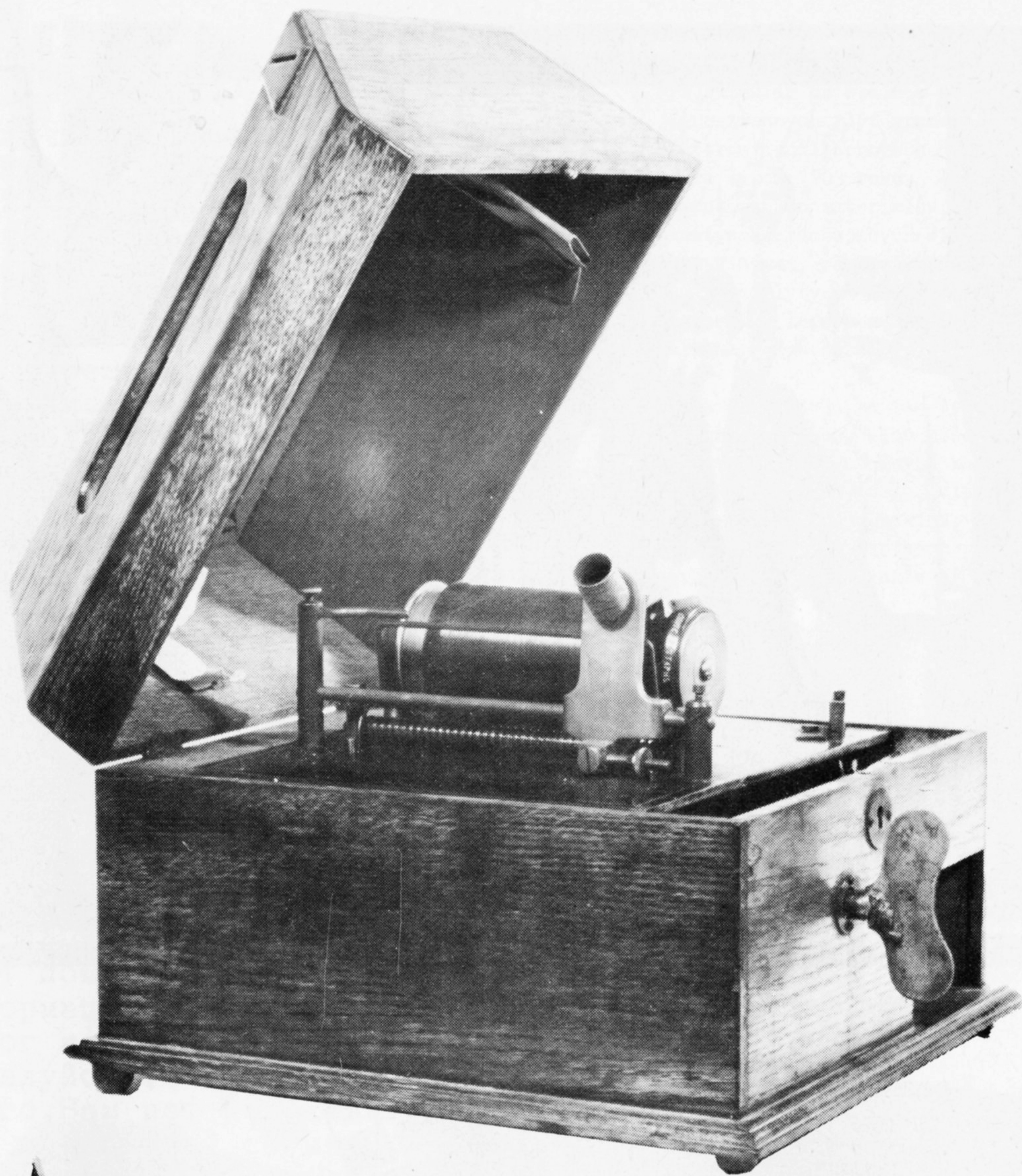
April

1978



Sotheby's Belgravia







ЭОНОФОН

ZONOPHONE

Я подготавливаю к изданию каталог старых односторонних грампластинок фирмы "Международный Зонофон", которые были изданы до июля 1903 года. Мои поиски были успешны в отношении стран, близких к Великобритании. Но мне известно, что в то время эта фирма издавала диски на территории бывшей Австро-Венгерской империи, бывшей Турецкой империи, на Балканах и в царской России.

Подробности об этих дисках могут быть собраны в одном каталоге или же могут находиться в отдельных национальных каталогах. Я видел один каталог 1903 года, включающий наряду с основной информацией о французских, голландских, бельгийских и испанских дисках некоторые сербские и австрийские издания. Мне известно, что инженеры звукозаписи фирмы работали по всей Европе, в том числе и в Москве.

Меня интересует информация о семидюймовых /19см/ дисках с каталоговыми номерами ниже 20.000 и десятидюймовых /25см/ дисках с каталоговыми номерами ниже X3000... на любом языке.

Вероятно, Вы сами или кто-либо из Ваших знакомых смогут помочь мне в получении вышеупомянутой информации. Если у Вас имеется подобный каталог или Вам известно его местонахождение, пожалуйста, вышлите мне его фотокопию. Кроме того, Вам нет необходимости утруждать себя перепиской со мной. Я хотел бы, чтобы Ваша помощь в этой области исторических исследований явилась памятным международным вкладом. По завершении работы вышлю Вам экземпляр сборника или возьму расходы литературой по Вашему выбору.

Ernie Bayly, 19. Glendale Road, Bournemouth, BH6 4JA, АНГЛИЯ.

Przygotowiam do wydania katalog starych jednostronnych plyt gramofonowych wytorni "International Zonophone", ktorzy byli wydane przerw lipca 1903 roku. Zdobyłem sukces w poszukiwaniu materialow, jakie byli wydane w panstwach staczajacych Wielku Brytaniju. Ale jest wiadomo, że tamtem czas dziseisza wytornia wydawala plyty na territorijach bylej Austijacko-Wegierskij imperium, Osmanskij imperium, na Balkanach i w Rossijskiej imperium.

Pewna informacja za tam ty plyty może być zebrana w jedynym katalogu albo może znajdowatcy w oddzielnych nacionalnych katalogach. Widzialem taki katalog 1903 zoku, włączający obok podstawowej informacji o francuzskich, holenderskich, belgijskich i hispanskich plytach niektory serbskie i austrijackie wydania.

Mnie jest wiadomo że inżyniery udźwiękowienia wytorni pracowali na cale Europie, w tym i w Moskwie.

Ja jestem interesujący w informacji o siedemcalowych (d= 19 cm) plytach z katalogowymi numerami ponizej 20,000 i dziesięciocalowych (d= 25 cm) plytach z katalogowymi numerami ponizej X3000 na wszelkiem języku..

Prawdopodobnie, pa sam lub ktos z znajomych pana zmozie pomoc mnie w otrzymaniu wyzej wymienionej informacji. Jeżeli pan posiada podobny katalog lub panu wiadomo jego siedziba, prosze pana wyslac mnie jego fotokopie.

Poza tym, nie ma konieczności trudzić panu korespondencjom ze mnoj. Ja chciał by zeby pana pomoc w tej zakresie historycznych badan zjawila sie pamiętnym miedzynarodowym wnioskiem.

Po zakonczemu pracy wyslam Panu egzemplarz zbiorka albo zwracam wydatki literaturom do wyboru pana.

Ernie Bayly, 19. Glendale Road, Bournemouth BH6 4JA
Wielku Brytaniju.

Earlier this year the Copyright Laws of the U S A altered. All those involved with re-issuing early recordings and/or music are advised to consult the new laws.

While your Editor is not involved with Law, he has learned that the first steps have been taken to ensure that when a Patent is granted in one country it will automatically apply to the whole world. Anyone requiring a Patent should consult an expert before submitting his application, in view of potential advantages from world recognition.

We hope to reprint this Autumn the "Story of Nipper and the H M V Painting" in a new edition with additional pictures.

Our publication "The E M I Collection is now sold out. At present we have no plans for an immediate reprint.

Readers who have ordered recently may experience a delay in delivery for we are awaiting the return of some unsold copies from certain bookshops and for some 'remainder' pages to be made up into complete books.

At the time of typing these notes, the reprint of Sydney H. Carter's Complete Listing of Edison Blue Amberol Cylinders is almost ready and we hope to have full details on the duplicated pages.

Wanted by Editor. Details of all International Zonophone records issued in eastern Europe, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Turkey & Balkans prior to June, 1903.

The advent of electric recording marked the beginning of epoch for the record industry. Live recording, the capturing of the sound of a full symphony orchestra, and so many other things which hitherto had merely been pipe dreams suddenly became possible. Almost overnight, difficulties which for years had retarded progress were removed. The gramophone was experiencing a second youth.

The only substantial "problem" with the new method was that it very quickly rendered acoustic records - even the very best acoustic records - obsolete. The comparatively poor quality of such discs posed a problem for companies such as Victor. To scrap huge catalogues of recordings, laboriously built up over a period of nearly a quarter of a century, on the ground that the discs now sounded rather primitive would have been inconceivable; besides, a number of the titles still sold quite well. On the other hand, the old records were not the best advertisement for the company and it was clear that many would have to go.

(Editor's comment = Having seen some of the files still existing at EMI, its officials in 1929 had no problems, for many hundreds of "metal parts" were consigned to the scrap heap!)

One particular difficulty concerned some of Caruso's recordings. When the tenor died in 1921, Victor's vaults contained a number of previously unpublished Caruso discs, many of which were issued at irregular intervals over the next few years. This policy was continued in the electric era, but by the late 1920's recording techniques had advanced to such an extent that one could have been forgiven for wondering whether it was worth worrying about unpublished acoustic recordings. Noting the problem, a bright spark suggested that there was no reason why an acoustic disc could not be re-recorded electrically with some amplification, thus putting its volume at least on par with the new releases, with a consequent improvement in signal-to-noise ratio. The logic of this was inescapable, and in due time the suggestion was put to the test, with the result that DA 1097 and DB 1386 (Victor 1437 and 7156 respectively) entered our catalogues in 1930 in dubbed form. (The only other Caruso titles to be re-recorded in this way was "Vecchia zimarra", the matrix of which had been destroyed.)

Then came a further idea: if these acoustic records could be improved by slight amplification and tonal correction why could they now also be issued in re-recorded form with a new accompaniment superimposed on the old? This idea certainly carried with it many exciting possibilities, and HMV and Victor could already see a substantial profit coming from large sales of revitalised recordings of the renowned Red Label / Red Seal vocalists. It was therefore decided to see what could be done. Naturally there was no dispute that Enrico Caruso should be the first to be thus "honoured".

Of the seventeen discs which ultimately comprised the so-called "recreation" series, sixteen were destined to be by Caruso, the remaining one being given to Luisa Tetrazzini.

The view espoused by the publicity departments of HMV/Victor that the process used for the recreations could be likened "to putting a new frame on an old master" is one not generally shared by those who have written on the subject. Indeed, the whole recreation series is often dismissed as being totally unworthy of a place in one's collection. As a

generalisation this is quite untrue, for the recreations differ widely in quality: the worse are certainly poor in the extreme, but the best are remarkably effective. Of the thirty four issued titles, I know in some form, twenty-one, and by discussing the relative merits of each of these it should be possible to present a fairly accurate picture of how successful the recreations were in living up to their name.

Before discussing the discs individually, a brief word on the recording technique is in order. While a pressing of the original disc was played, the studio orchestra would play the accompaniment, the beat being relayed to the orchestra by the conductor who listened to the original through a set of headphones. The recording engineer combined the two signals (i.e. those from the disc being played and from the studio orchestra providing the new accompaniment) at their proper volume levels, and the resultant combined signal was fed to the recording machine. The original disc was generally filtered to a greater or lesser extent to eliminate as much as possible of the old orchestral accompaniment. (More about this later.)

To the records themselves, which will be discussed in approximately chronological order. The first disc, "M'appari tutt' amor" and "Vesti la giubba" on DB1875 was so surprisingly successful that it prompted the following effusion from HMV

"CARUSO'S REAL VOICE AT LAST"

"How many times have you, listening to a Caruso record, regretted that the great tenor died before the invention of electric recording - before it was possible for the recording apparatus to register all the telling overtones, the finest nuances, of that golden voice? You must have regretted it hundreds of times, and so has every epoch; for as good as Caruso's records are, the earliest of them was made over thirty years ago. In those days recording was, comparatively speaking, in its infancy.

"Four years elapsed between Caruso's death and the advent of electric recording. Since then a staff of musicians and engineers have been working to devise some means by which the Caruso recordings could be brought to life to give the world the greatest voice of our age as it actually sounded to those who heard it. Seven years of tireless research, ceaseless experiment, and at last - triumph! By a secret process, His Master's Voice engineers succeeded in bringing from the twenty year old record the true magical quality of Caruso's voice that lay latent within the wax disc; and as the voice rang out, a new orchestral accompaniment was overlaid. So now we have a record giving to millions of people the voice of Caruso as it actually sounded twenty years ago in all its natural freshness and glory. Not until you hear this record - unless, indeed, you heard Caruso in his lifetime - can you have any real conception of the miraculous beauty of that incomparable voice."

Such humbug was characteristic of the talking machine industry of the day, yet notwithstanding the obvious excursions into hyperbole undertaken by the writer, his ramblings do contain certain elements of truth; for apart from a rather too loud introduction to the "Marta" aria, both sides of the discs are good in respect of the quality of both voice and accompaniment. The original accompaniment tends to "bleed through" somewhat,

but not so much as to spoil the disc. Critics often express the opinion that the 1906 recording of "M'appari" should have been used for the recreation instead of the 1917 version. They have one point, for whereas eleven years had seen a great improvement in Caruso's dramatic ability, the unfortunate intervention of some 160,000 cigarettes had taken its inescapable toll on his breath control, and the legato so effective in his earlier version was, to a great extent, lost. On the other hand, the later recording is of much better quality than the earlier, and this fact alone compensates for much.

Recorded at the same session was Caruso's beautiful rendition of "O Sole Mio", which also makes a successful recreation. The only complaint that one can really make is that the introductions to each verse are rather loud.

After these three titles, DB 2073 comes as a great disappointment. As Frank Puls has suggested "The Lost Chord" might well be renamed "The Lost Chords", for in order to substitute organ for the original orchestral accompaniment, HMV found it necessary to filter the original disc to such an extent that it is surprising that any of the voice was left at all. "Ombra mai fu" was also a victim of unwarranted filters, and although not affected to the same degree as "The Lost Chord", leaves much to be desired. The strange thing is that HMV and Victor actually released such a poor quality disc - and at a time when the better original version (HMV DB 113) was still in the catalogue. Even more remarkable is that a significant number of people were willing to part with their money to possess this poor excuse for a record.

According to The Gramophone Co., the success of the first Caruso recreation had led many people to write suggesting that the process be applied to old records of other great singers. On the occasion of Tetrzzini's farewell tour of Britain in the winter of 1933-4, HMV purportedly bowed to public demand and issued a recreation of the famous soprano singing "Una voce poco fa" and "Caro nome". Actually, the credit for this recreation could fairly safely be given to Fred Gaisberg rather than public opinion, as Fred was a friend of Tetrzzini. He would have known well that the issue of a recreation of her voice would not only please her, but would also result in the payment of royalties which the not-so-well-off "Tet" would appreciate. The resulting product was certainly a step in the right direction, but could not be described as anything more than satisfactory. Although filtering of the original is not as great as in DB 2073, the voice is still somewhat constricted and seems to lack Tetrzzini's characteristic rich, clear tone. Furthermore, the orchestral accompaniment tends to be just a little too loud.

Victor, either by good luck or good management, seemed to escape any major problems with the volume of the accompaniment. As far as filtering of the original was concerned, Victor took a sensible attitude: it didn't. The Victor engineers reasoned that so long as the glorious quality of Caruso's voice remained untampered with, it did not matter if a little of the brassy quality of the original orchestra could be heard. Because of this philosophy, the American-recorded recreations were, tonally, exceptionally effective. Victor seemed bothered by one problem, namely the synchronisation of the new and old accompaniments. "La donna e mobile" was the first title to really suffer in this way. At the first "e di pensier", the new orchestra becomes horribly out of step, and the resultant sound is not exactly pleasant. As well as this fault, the surface noise of the original is rather obvious.

This would have been but a minor problem were such noise in the background continually, but Victor decided to cut the original while the introduction to each verse was played, with the result that the noise seems more apparent because of the relative quiet between verses.

The out-of-step orchestra also manifested itself in what must have been Victor's most effective recreation, DB 1875. The "Celeste Aida" with its powerful brass fanfares in the recitative and beautiful string accompaniment in the aria is truly magnificent, giving an effect of thrilling realism. After comparing the acoustic and electric versions of this title, none could deny the worth of the recreation process. Its excellence almost allows one to ignore the cacophony which occurs in the last few bars caused by what sounds like a contest between the original and new accompanying orchestras as to who can get to the end first. The new orchestra ultimately wins, in volume if in nothing else, but its assault upon the ears in so doing is unpardonable. "Je crois entendre encore" contains a somewhat lesser aural assault in the recitative, but otherwise it is of the same tonal excellence as "Celeste Aida".

Whereas Victor's recreations were, by this time, most satisfactory in quality, HMV was still limping along under the mistaken belief that high filtering of the original was absolutely necessary to produce a satisfactory recreation. Such filtering ruins the recreation of "Because", making Caruso sound as if he were standing six feet from the recording horn and had a bad head cold into the bargain. To add insult to injury, I must say that I do not like the orchestral rallentando at the end of the song: I would have much preferred the concluding bars to be taken accelerando as in the original version.

Fortunately HMV began to change its policy as to filtering, and as a result "La Mia Canzone", recorded a mere three months after "Because", is exceptionally good, with a beautiful orchestral accompaniment. The respite from filtering was only temporary, as can be heard when one listens to "Santa Lucia". Caruso's voice seems to lack "body", but if one tries to restore this by advancing the bass control, the accompaniment becomes very bottom heavy. Consequently, this disc cannot be said to be one of the best in the series.

DB 2644 was the first Caruso recreation I acquired, and is one which made me wonder whether the critics who said that none of the recreations was worth owning were completely sane; for this reconditioned "Recondita armonia" is certainly one of the finest achievements of the process. The voice retains its proper quality and the superimposed accompaniment gives the aria the beauty which is perhaps not so evident in the original. The old orchestra is more or less audible throughout but is not in the way and blends in well. As a matter of interest, the acoustic "Recondita armonia" was on a 10-inch disc, but the electric version was put on a 12-inch discs so that the full introduction to the aria (which had been cut in the original) could be accommodated.

It is unfortunate that the reverse side of DB 2644, Bizet's "Agnus Dei" does not quite seem to match the quality of side one, Caruso's voice sounding somewhat thin and strained. The record does have one redeeming feature: the accompaniment is much more pleasant to listen to than that of the acoustic version!

"O Paradiso!" was an obvious candidate for electrification, but the finished product fell short of the mark due to some false thinking by those concerned. It was reasoned that

in the parts of the aria given to the orchestra alone, it would be better to eliminate the original orchestra completely, thus allowing a "cleaner" sound. The rest of the time the orchestra would play with the existing accompaniment, except for several "insignificant" spots where the original orchestra would be allowed to play alone. Even in theory, such a course can be seen to be questionable. In practice it was worse. Added to this, the surface noise of the original is apparent. At least the voice remained unscathed, but this record shows how not to make a recreation than anything else.

By the time of the issue of DB 2991 in 1936, the public seemed to be tiring of recreations. What four years previously had been both a technical triumph and a novelty was now a fait accompli. Despite this, HMV had no intention of abandoning the process (though after the success of "Celeste Aida" and "Je crois entendre encore" Victor seemed to be content to rest on its laurels and leave the hard work of recording to HMV). During the next three years, several fine records were made, including an excellent "Inspirez-moi, race divine" on DB 3078. "Les Rameaux" and "Hosanna" on DB 3122 are also fairly good, though spoilt somewhat by the fact that the volume of the orchestra is too great and the disc is somewhat "over-recorded" thus causing distortion.

One of the triumphs of the later recordings is "Parted" and "Addio" on DB 3327, which record justly deserves the label of "recreation". The balance between voice and orchestra is as near to perfect as one could wish for and the voice retains its full richness and power. Furthermore, the difference made to these two by the substitution of a good orchestral backing for the wheezy brass band sound of the original accompaniments is amazing. This is surely a disc which should have awakened interest in the recreations; yet a mere two years and six sides saw the discontinuance of the electrical rerecording process. Perhaps this course was due to the exigencies of World War 2; no doubt this was a contributing factor.

The real explanation seems more likely to be found in a change of philosophy that was beginning to hit the record industry. For years it had been felt that certain acoustic records should continue to be available to the public, despite their comparatively primitive quality, because of their intrinsic worth - hence records by such as Caruso, Patti, and Melba could still be bought over the counter in 1940. The same applied to the popular field: Regal Zonophone still offered a couple of discs which Billy Williams had recorded thirty years previously, and the Columbia catalogue contained several acoustic discs made by Prince's Band. By 1945 there was hardly an acoustic disc left in the catalogues and a large number of electric discs had been deleted. Apparently someone had decided that historic interest was secondary and that fidelity to the original was more important. Why bother to go to all the trouble of making Caruso discs sound acceptable to modern listeners when recent and technically "perfect" records of Gigli were available? Thus the recreation series was wound up,

with few interested enough to mourn its passing.

(Editor's comment- I would think that World War 2 was the influence against continuing 'recreations' and for removing acoustic records from the catalogue. People not living in Europe during the War Years cannot comprehend how completely War changed life, reducing it to the mere essentials. The records remaining in catalogue, with restricted supplies, just had to be those for "the majority". Perhaps it could be said that it was Adolf Hitler who dictated the policy of record companies!)

Until recently, one might have been forgiven for thinking that the idea of remaking historical recordings had gone for good; however 1976 saw the release by RCA Victor of an LP titled "Caruso - A Legendary Performer" (RCA Victor CRM 1). The sixteen tracks on this disc comprise Caruso originals which have been reprocessed by computer with the purpose of removing as much as possible of the distortion inherent in the acoustic recordings - and with highly creditable results, although there are still a few things to be corrected. In the light of this new process which can get as much fidelity from the grooves as is humanly (? computer) possible, it might be asked whether the recreation series still has any real worth. The answer to such a question must be in the affirmative, for good as the new "Soundstream" process is, the reprocessed titles still give us no idea of what Caruso sounded like on stage accompanied by a proper orchestra. The great and abiding virtue of the better recreations is the illusion which they create, and because of this, despite their imperfections, these records must be prized.

Is there any future for the recreation process? To answer this question properly, one must remember the major technical problem that plagued the 1932 - 39 series. The insurmountable difficulty was not synchronisation, nor was it surface noise or volume balance; rather, the problem was that the modern accompaniment highlighted the deficiencies of the acoustical recording process, with the result that Caruso tended to sound as if he were shouting down a pipe. With the Soundstream process and modern technology, this is no longer a problem. The peaky response of the original can now be levelled out and an echo chamber could be used, in an appropriate case, in order to compensate for the lack of room resonance captured by the acoustic recording horn - otherwise the voice would not blend well with the modern orchestra. Though not generally a supporter of the use of echo chambers and the like, I feel that an exception is warranted in the present case, provided such devices were used in moderation. Though requiring much time and effort, surely such a procedure could produce impressive results. Would RCA Victor care to take up the challenge and give us what was claimed for the recreations of forty-five years ago - "the voice of Caruso as it actually sounded....in all its natural freshness and glory".

A P P E N D I X 1. The electrically amplified titles.

- Première caresse (Marinier & de Crescenzo)
- Bois epais, redouble ton ombre ("Amadis de Gaulle"-Lully)
- Addio (Tosti)
- Deh, ch'io ritorni ("l'Africana" - Meyerbeer)
- Vecchia zimarra, senti ("La Boheme" - Puccini)

B 23144-4	9th Sep. 1919	DA 1097	1437
B 24465-6	16th Sep. 1920	DA 1097	1437
C 9747	29th Dec. 1910	DB 1386	7156
C 24464-5	16th Sep. 1920	DB 1386	7156
B 17198	23rd Feb. 1916	DL 100	87499

The correct playing speed of each of the above is 75 rpm.

M'appari tutt'amor ("Marta" - Flotow)	CVE 58965	C 3100-2	15. Apr. 1917	DB 1802	7720 12-1015(DM 1329)
Vesti la giubba ("I Pagliacci" - Leoncavallo)	CVE 58966	C 4317-1	17. Mar. 1907	DB 1802	7720 12-1015(DM 1329)
'O Sole Mio (Capurro & di Capua)	BVE 58967	B 17124	5. Feb. 1916	DA 1303	1616
A Dream (Cory & Bartlett)	BVE 71799	B 24466-3	16. Sep. 1920	DA 1349	S-1617 1658
La donna e mobile ("Rigoletto" - Verdi)	BVE 71800	B 6033	16. Mar. 1908	DA 1303	1616
The Lost Chord (Procter & Sullivan)	2B 3570-2A	C 11942-1	29. Apr. 1912	DB 2073	8806
Ombra mai fu ("Serse" - Handel)	2B 3571-1	C 23714-5	29. Jan. 1920	DB 2073	8806
Celeste Aida forma divina (Aida - Verdi)	CVE 74803	C11423	27. Dec. 1911	DB 1875	7770 8993 (M 303) 12-1014 (DM 1329)
Je crois entendre encore ("Les Pecheurs de Perles" - Bizet)	CVE 74804	C 18822-3	7. Dec. 1916	DB 1875	7770 8993 (M 303)
Una voce poco fa ("Il Barbiere di Siviglia" - Rossini)	A10071				
	2B 5032-1			DB 1979	
Caro Nome ("Rigoletto" - Verdi)	2B 5033-	A10074		DB 1979	
For You Alone (O'Reilly & Geehl)	OB 5102-2,3.	B 9744-1	28. Dec. 1910	DA 1349	1658
Because (d'Hardelot)	OB 5151-1	B 12680-2	7. Dec. 1912	DA 1380	1688
La mia conzone (Cimmino & Tosti)	OB 5990-2	B 15481-3	7. Jan. 1915	DA 1380	1688
Vaghiissima sembianza (Donaudy)	OB 6070-2	B 24463-4	15. Sep. 1920	DA 1367	
Sultanto a tte (Fucito)	OB 6071-2	B 22515-2	10. Feb. 1919	DA 1367	
Santa Lucia (arr. Cottrau)	2EA 652-2	C 17344	20. Mar. 1916	DB 2991	
Recondita armonia ("La Tosca" - Puccini)	2EA 1570-2A	B 8347	6. Nov. 1909	DB 2644	11-8569
Agnus Dei (Bizet)	2EA 1571-2A	C 12942	24. Feb. 1913	DB 2644	17814
O Paradiso! ("l'Africana" - Meyerbeer)	2EA 4012-1	C 4160-2	30. Dec. 1906	DB 2991	14234
Il fior che avevi a me tu dato ("Carmen" - Bizet)	2EA 4093-2A	C 8349	7. Nov. 1909	DB 3023	14234 12-1016 (DM 1329)
Addio alla madre ("Cavalleria Rusticana" - Mascagni)	2EA 4125-1	C 14202-2	15. Dec. 1913	DB 3023	15732 12-1016 (DM 1329)
Inspirez-moi, race divine ("La Reine de Saba" - Gounod)	2EA 4126-1	C 17125-2	5. Feb. 1916	DB 3078	15732
La Procession (Brizeux & Franck)	2EA 4186-1	C 17121-3	5. Feb. 1916	DB 3078	14744
Les Rameaux (Faure)	2EA 4187-1	C 14201-3	9. Mar. 1914	DB 3122	14744
Hosanna (Didée & Granier)	2EA 4188-1	C 12681-2	7. Dec. 1912	DB 3122	17814
Parted (Weatherley & Tosti)	2EA 5828-1	B 14550	9. Mar. 1914	DB 3327	
Addio (Tosti)	2EA 5829-1	C 9747	29. Dec. 1910	DB 3327	
Trusting Eyes (Rey-Roise & Gartner)	OEA 5832	B 14203-4	9. Mar. 1914	DA 1656	
Addio a Napoli (Cottrau)	OEA 6751-1	B 23140-6	9. Sep. 1919	DA 1655	2212
Musica Proibita (Gastalson)	OEA 6752-2	C 15480-5	15. Apr. 1917	DA 1655	2212
Your eyes have told me what I did not know (Bowles & O'Hara)	OEA 6753	B 13106-2	10. Apr. 1913	DA 1656	
Una furtiva lagrima ("l'Elisir d'Amore" - Donizetti)	2EA 8402	C 996	26. Nov. 1911	DB 3903	11-8112 12-1014 (DM 1329)
Parmi veder le lagrime ("Rigoletto" - Verdi)	2EA 8403	C 11421-2	24. Feb. 1913	DB 3903	11-8112

The author is grateful for assistance he has received from B.Badham, M.Druce, C.Long, F.Puls, M.Robson, E.Whiteway.

RECORD PACKETS

E.Bayly

Over the years, by buying old 78 rpm records one also, often quite unwittingly, gathers together an appreciable number of their original record covers.

These basically fall into three main categories -

1. A cover of the original maker of the record inside it, which is sub-divided into;
 - a) a cover with no holes in the sides, i.e. for Berliners, being various colours of plain card with a stand-up flap upon which the owner wrote the title; or such as the

special G & T covers with pictures of the artiste upon them, e. g. Melba; or Fonotipia with pictures of the artiste.

- b) a cover with a hole on one side for a single-sided disc.
 - c) a cover with a hole in each side for a double-sided disc.
2. A cover of the shop selling the record, having just the vendor's name and address.
 3. A cover of the shop selling the record with various pictorial matter in addition to the name and address.

In categories 1 and 3 there might also be useful details of other records, pictures of various gramophones, pictures of artistes, or scenes typical of the times when the record was sold.

Recently, Topic records made use of such scenes to illustrate the sleeves of their LP reissues from Beltona of Bob Smith's Ideal Band. It showed people listening to a gramophone at home in one scene, and the inevitable portable at the inevitable picnic, the latter this time being about one yard from the waters lapping up the beach!

There was also a series of adverts sponsored by Songster needles giving hints for gramophone users, incorporating a message about needles.

Many readers will be familiar with the H M V covers that show artistes, or artistes listening to a Gramophone. In the latter, the model is sometimes numbered.

A collector living in a metropolitan area might make an interesting collection of covers originating from shops still, or formerly, in his area. Living rurally, or in a small town, perhaps one might specialise in one's county or state.

Or, like me, you need not specialise at all, but just collect any that are interesting. This of course includes our first category, for although very old records are usually found in the junky places we frequent minus covers, all records began their lives with one. So it is nice to find, say, a nice early Edison Bell, Clarion or Pilot cover.

Living in Bournemouth with its normally mild climate, one notices that there was a migration south from places like

Lancashire or Yorkshire, presumably being people who decided to take up residence here on retirement (which is most common) or to take work here when younger to be here ready for retirement!

Illustrated below are two dealers' cover whose names are similar to my own, though are no relations. The shop showing the airplane has the same surname spelling and has now gone. That from Ashton-under-Lyne is well remembered by several collectors in that area. Jim Lowe told me that his family bought many a record there.

As paper and card covers, by virtue of their original poor quality, or age, tend to become spoiled easily, I have been investigating the possibility of having made some ring-binders (such as students use for notepapers) with rings of about 2-inch height, of sufficient size to take twelve-inch covers in plastic bags, which one could punch with holes to fit the rings. In this way a collection could be kept together clean and tidy. The twelve inch size would of course allow for storage of any lesser size.

Firms which make binders to customers' orders quote 25 as being the minimum to be economical to the purchaser. With a vinyl cover, these would cost £3 - £3.50 each, with no title blocked upon them, the variable in the price allowing for any final specification...For instance, a small clear plastic pocket could be welded on to the front in which one could slip one's own title written neatly on a piece of card. Equally, a pocket could be welded somewhere on the spine.

As I cannot see myself requiring 25 binders just now, any reader wishing to join the project to make it a worthwhile possibility should write to me at once!

Ernest Bayley

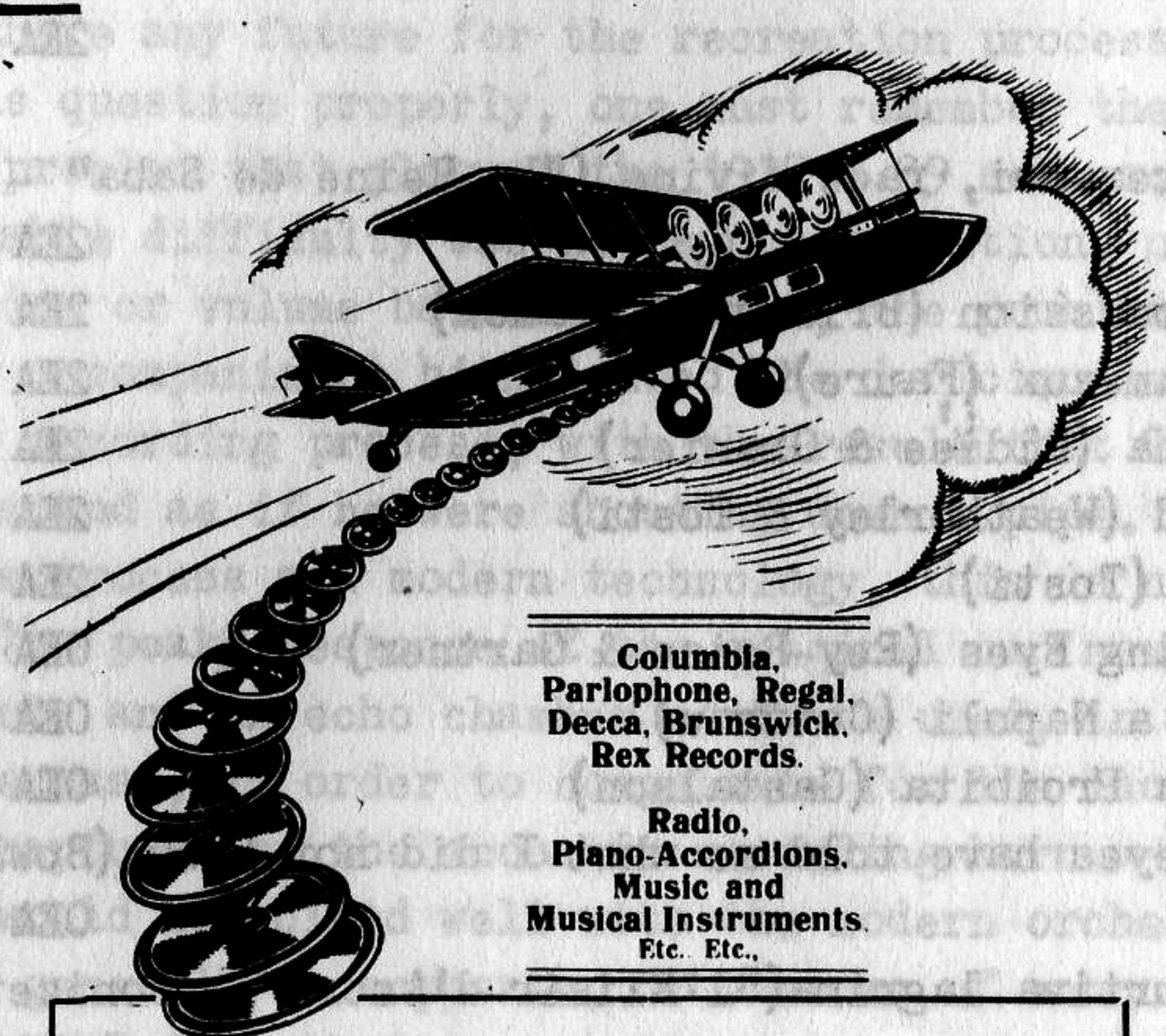
His Master's Voice
Gramophones and Records.

Repairs
a
Speciality.

All
Accessories
in Stock.

79, Katherine St., Penny-Meadow,
ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE.

We are grateful to Peter Kennedy of Manchester who sent in the jacket above



Columbia,
Parlophone, Regal,
Decca, Brunswick,
Rex Records.

Radio,
Piano-Accordions,
Music and
Musical Instruments.
Etc. Etc.

A. M. BAYLY,

851, WIMBORNE ROAD, MOORDOWN,
BOURNEMOUTH. Phone: WIMBORNE 708

Philip Archer sent in the jacket above with the query, "Was the event shown on this jacket a record-breaking publicity stunt?" Thank you Philip.

KEALOHA LIFE

(We are grateful to Jeff Link of Radio Solent for permission to transcribe a brief interview he did in his '78's for '78' programme recently with Kealoha Life who was a member of Felix Mendelssohn's Hawaiian Serenaders.)

Musical interludes were taken from the World Records reissue LP of Felix Mendelssohn's Group, number SH 259, which we understand from local record shops is selling well. Introductory music Maui Waltz.

- J....The music of Felix Mendelssohn & his Hawaiian Serenaders. The soloist, Kealoha Life was performing at a pub in Woolston (Southampton) recently. I went along to enjoy the show and I asked Kealoha to comment upon my pronunciation of his Polynesian name.
- K Ma ha na ka e, which means it's very good.
- J How many languages do you speak then?
- K Eleven fluently. Due to the fact that I was brought up in Switzerland, my mother tongue is French, and in Switzerland one has to be tri-lingual, and having studied a number of languages above that number, it becomes quite easy once one has the key, so to speak.
- J What brings you to Southampton?
- K To attend the Convention of the British Steel Guitarists Guild. Actually I live in Hampshire. I have lived there for seventeen years.
- J Where were you before that?
- K In South Africa for twenty years. Playing to all sorts of audiences including African, Indian, Mauritian.....
- J I was rather shocked to hear that you had never been to Hawaii. Do you feel like a traitor perhaps?
- K It is rather awkward. Although I speak Hawaiian fluently, having been brought up with them and playing with them, I feel that if I went to Hawaii it would be like coming home.
- J I suppose that when you started playing with Felix Mendelssohn, that music was something novel and quite new.
- K We should say that it was a revival, for since the early Bird of Paradise days, when the Hawaiians had invaded the stage in Britain, one could say that it had enormous popularity which waned until Felix Mendelssohn, the great publicity man, a prince of bandleaders as he was called in the press, put Hawaiian music again on the map with much greater verve and force than had ever been done before.

- J I read in that publicity material that Felix Mendelssohn was a direct descendant of Mendelssohn of Fingal's Cave. Was that true?
- K No, not at all to the original classical Mendelssohn, but it was a great help in his publicity hand-outs.
- J It was a good story!
- K Enormous, yes!
- J How close is that Hawaiian sound that we have just heard off records to the original Polynesian sound?
- K In the main, apart from the many different types of music we played, such as semi-classical music, tangos, jazz and the rock music of the day which we called jive, the music itself from the traditional point of view was absolutely accurate. Because, although Felix was not too well versed in it himself, he used Polynesian musicians who were familiar with that music and were renowned in their own country for it, so therefore it was absolutely authentic. He had a beautiful Hawaiian girl named Louisa Moy, and her husband was a well-known steel guitar player. There was a young Javanese on plectrum guitar named Segundo, plus myself we made up a nucleus of traditional Hawaiian musicians.
- J Did you ever sing falsetto in any of the songs?
- K Oh no! (Laughing) That was before my voice broke. Some people who listened to our records or radio broadcasts thought I was a young lady and I received letters addressed to Miss Kealoha Life!
- J Now we are going to hear you singing The Hawaiian War Chant. I do not know what the words mean . . . I cannot hear words! What are you saying on this record?
- K There was a great war, and the warriors fought each other until they had each other upon the ground. (Speaks some Hawaiian words very rapidly).

Both laugh and record plays.....

EDISONIA — EDISON BELL

RE. The EDISONIA / EDISON BELL

c.1898 catalogue reprint given as a supplement to an early T. M. R.

Researching and re-reading your Edisonia / Edison Bell c.1898 reproduced catalogue which you presented with an early issue of the Talking Machine Review. I can now give a more accurate but not definitive account about the records and circumstances surrounding them.

"London Records" James Edward Hough began a business in phonographs, as an exhibitor, in December, 1893, in the City of London, assisted by members of his family and Harry Bluff, the latter recording songs and speeches, sometimes in imitation of the original performers, such records being used for the exhibition of the phonographs. This business was carried on in infringement of the rights in Edison and Bell & Tainter Letters Patents owned by the Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation, Limited. Litigation ensued, but during the protracted proceedings, Hough carried on his business, under the style of The London Phonograph Company, until finally enjoined by the Court in October, 1896.

In April, 1894, he had turned from exhibition work to deal in phonographs and records (cylinders), the latter being both imports (Edison, Columbia, etc.) and his own "London Records". In 1897, with the co-operation of the Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation, Limited, Edisonia Limited was formed by J. E. Hough and financial backing from some close business

acquaintances. Edisonia Limited was the sole licensee of "Edison Bell" for the sale (not hire) of all makes of records and phonographs. The former business of the London Phonograph Company was the basis of business for Edisonia Limited and the "London Records" continued, as well as more imports from Edison, Columbia and probably minor American makes of cylinder records. J. E. Hough had made a business trip to the U S A in 1897, placing large orders for stocks for Edisonia Limited.

In 1898, under pressure from the Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation Ltd., J. E. Hough and his backers sold out to "Edison Bell", his licence and trade was withdrawn, and a new company, the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., Ltd. was established which both sold and "let-on-hire" phonographs and sold cylinder records. J. E. Hough was appointed the General Sales Manager.

The small catalogue which you circulated as a supplement, bearing "20. Cheapside, London" on the back, had no cover, but is identifiable as a publication of Edisonia Ltd. and almost certainly pre-dates October, 1898, when Russell Hunting became head of the recording department of Edisonia, Ltd., which by then, was the record manufacturing subsidiary of the Edison Bell Consolidated Phonograph Co., Ltd.

The small catalogue is therefore, either from early or mid-1898, or even late 1897, following upon J. Hough's trip to the U S A and contains both "London Records" (the artistes being H. Bluff, William Ditcham, Eric Farr, Keith Maitland, and possibly Alma Jones in the "songs from comic operas" selection, and Harry Douglass, mandoline solos, would also appear, from his repertoire, to have been London-recorded) and American imports (the artistes being Fisher, J. W. Myers, George Gaskin and Russell Hunting with, and without, the Diamond Quartette ("Diamond Four" in U S A). Possibly all the orchestral records were American, although every item in the operatic section was in the No.3 London Records catalogue of Edison Bell at September, 1900, with the exception of "Rigoletto".

Edward Hess, orchestral arranger, who joined J. E. Hough in his early years, may have been responsible for orchestral recordings in London during 1897/8. This has to be established, but it certainly needed more expertise to record orchestral items than solo voices or instrumentalists. Russell

Hunting's arrival in October, 1898, gave "Edison Bell's" Edisonia this knowledge.

The "speeches" recordings would have been on "London Records" and recorded by either Harry Bluff or William Lynd, both were adept at such, and much experienced in this craft and doubtless they made the "Gladstone" recordings. William Lynd would have known the genuine Gladstone recordings having been one of the pioneer demonstrators from 1888 to 1892 and had imitated them for J. L. Young's business of 1893 onwards. J. E. Hough would not have access to the genuine Gladstone recordings until after he became General Sales Manager, in 1898, to "Edison Bell".

Harry Bluff's recordings may lead to a more accurate dating of the catalogue, for, assuming that he had recorded the latest hits of the day, their publication dates might be determined. Perhaps someone with a desire to research might find the answer in the music section of the British Library at Bloomsbury, London.

NOSTALGIA BOOK CLUB

165, Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, New York 10801

Two brothers from the same address are Arlington House Publishers and the 'Nostalgia Book Club'. We have reviewed items from both in our pages in the past, in the current issue and we hope there will continue to be things to interest readers in the past.

A book club operates by choosing publications to suit its membership, and by having a certain minimum guaranteed sale is able to order a sizeable printing at an economic price. Readers have to purchase a certain minimum number of books in a stipulated period. The exception with the Nostalgia Book Club is that readers outside the American Continent have to make a minimum deposit of \$50, and then select books as they require them . . . it is almost like buying from a catalogue, and differs from the requirements of those living in the Americas; because of distances involved. It sounds like a privilege to those readers.

Because the Nostalgia Book Club may well interest enthusiasts of the 78-record era, we have asked Maureen McCaffrey, the publicity manager to write a piece for our pages

"The Nostalgia Book Club was started early in 1968 and offers books and records covering the lighter side of the 1920's through the 1960's. Movies, TV, radio, popular music, trivia, fashion and even comics are among the range of subjects covered. Membership is presently about 32,000.

The most impressive selection of the Nostalgia Book Club to date was "The Complete Encyclopedia of Popular Music and Jazz 1900 - 1950 by Roger D. Kinkle. This massive four volume set is the first work to cover in lavish detail every phase of American popular music (except rock): movie musicals, bands, popular songs and composers, jazz Broadway musicals, singers, musicians, vaudeville music on radio and TV, recordings, arrangers, impressarios. There are some 2,700 pages, over 35,000 musicals, over 1,500 Broadway musicals, over 11,000 artistes. "The Complete Encyclopedia of Popular Music & Jazz" retails for \$75. Nostalgia Book Club members can purchase it for \$37. 50.

Nostalgia Book Club members communicate with each other through the Bulletin's folksy, chatty column "Remembering". Collectors buy and sell books, photos, records and the like. Fans track down their old favourites and quiz each other with those seemingly unanswerable trivia questions. All in all the Nostalgia Book Club is a fun club to belong to.

Future selections and alternate choices will include "The Great Movie Comedians", 'Star Shots', 'Shoot-em-ups', 'The Complete reference guide to Westerns of the sound era', 'The Academy Awards' (4th. revised edition), 'Hollywood character Actors', 'Crawford's Encyclopedia of comic books', 'New Orleans Jazz', 'A Family Album' and 'Celebrity Homes'."

Elsewhere we review some of the items from Arlington House & The Nostalgia Book Club.

MR. HARRY BLUFF, Humorist.

Two extracts from "The Talking Machine News" of Edwardian days.

If Mr. Harry Bluff doesn't know now how to make a record then he never will. It's a safe statement to make, for anyone who knows the A.B.C. of the talking machine trade, knows that the very well-known Edison Bell artiste has made successful records by the hundreds, or one might say thousands. His experiences in this art began at the beginning. He has made

two thousand titles at least, nearly every one for the Edison Bell Co., though he flirted a little in younger days with the house of Pathe Freres. It's a big total to realise, two thousand, and there is not much fear of Harry Bluff running short of encores with such a repertoire. He's been making records now for about a dozen years. This alone puts him well in the front rank for experience in the profession.

It's about fifteen years since Harry Bluff first started singing for a living, as it were. Like many other successful artistes, he went the usual journey from school to commercial life, quickly sickened of the latter, and took the first by-road that promised to lead to success in a more congenial sphere. The latter was opened to my subject by no less an artiste than the great G. H. Chirgwin. The latter heard Mr. Bluff singing once in a sort of accidental way and suggested to him that his line was the concert platform. Chirgwin went further than this, the "White-Eyed Kaffir" was then running a company and he offered young Bluff a place in it, which he accepted. It was not at the rate of £70 per week, but it was a very comfortable start and the association lasted for a long time. Mr. Bluff speaks in the highest terms of the many kindnesses that Chirgwin did for him. It was at this time that Harry Bluff met Mr. J. E. Hough, for a long time now Manager of the Edison Bell Phonograph Co., but then in charge of the London Phonograph Co. The phonograph was then a very expensive novelty and most people were content to go to an exhibition and listen, with never a thought of being able to buy a machine. They were not to be bought with ease as the owners of the then patents had the misguided idea that it was best to hire them, rather than sell them. Mr. Hough offered Mr. Bluff the management of the place in Fore Street and, perhaps because he was a bit tired of travelling, or because of perception, he took it. The association lasts till this day. I don't know how many people heard Harry Bluff without knowing it, but when I tell you that every announcement on the Edison Bell record is made by the genial Bluff, you can guess that he has spoken to some millions of people. The same announcement with a note on the word "Bell" is an institution in itself.

About this time it was discovered that the new manager had a suitable voice for record-making, and he immediately commenced, his favourite subjects at that time were the songs of Dan Leno, of which he made a speciality. They were great times in record making in those days. On one occasion the achievement was 240 records in five days, which would take some beating. Mr. Hesse, of the Edison Bell Recording Department, was responsible for the Bluff records then made at Mr. Hesse's lodgings, and it became necessary, in consequence, to move from time to time. A song or two is well enough, but when you get hundreds of them in a few days, it becomes tiring. At one address the neighbours sent a complaint to the "inspector of nuisances", or some such official. At another time, when making a descriptive title of a fire scene, the frightened landlady rushed upstairs to the recording room and gave them the contents of a bucket of water. Eventually a semi-detached villa was secured at Stoke Newington. Here on the days appointed for recordings the inhabitants used to gather from the countryside around and there were talks of a summons for obstruction, but fortunately that did not eventuate, and they were allowed to proceed on the even tenour of their way.

About four years ago Mr. Bluff went on a tour in Jamaica with Mr. J. E. Hough. They had a very fine time with the show, a cinematograph, and had a great reception. In addition to the West Indies, he has sung in France and Switzerland and, of course, nearly everywhere in Britain.

I asked Mr. Bluff what he thought about the difference between recording in the early days and the present time, and he said that the main difference was that then all the records made by the artiste were masters: duplicating machines were unknown, much less the gold-moulded processes. They were sold for from five shillings upwards. Then came duplicating

machines, somewhat similar in principle to the pantograph, which had the effect of completely revolutionising the trade, for as the result of the invention it was possible to put records on the market at a popular price. Next followed the Concert Grand, which although most satisfactory from an artistic standpoint was severely handicapped by its high price. There was great difficulty also in dealing with it from the point of view of export. Then came the gold-moulded process which had the effect of putting on the market really good artistic records at a popular price.

By the way, the most popular record that Mr. Bluff ever made was of that well-known song "At the football match last Saturday", though this was run very close by his "Leno" records & that of his song, "The Park-keeper". I should mention that Mr. Bluff has found a charming partner for life in the person of the well-known contralto, professionally known as Miss Theresa Kellaway.

and some four or five years later.....

Our reporter ran Harry Bluff to earth in his office at the Favorite Record Company's warehouse, for whom he is now installed as Musical Director.

It seems that at the age of sixteen Harry was on the programme of a benefit concert, when the comedian failed to appear, so Harry was prevailed upon to fill the spot. Mr. G. H. Chirgwin happened to be in the wings and was very impressed. He asked Harry to help him at a benefit concert which he was organising. This was followed by an invitation on the part of that artiste to join him on his concert tour. Chirgwin thought so much of Harry Bluff's talents that he was arranging for him to appear on the Music Halls. This was frustrated by our subject meeting Mr. J. E. Hough, which was the beginning of sixteen or seventeen years' connection with the famous Edison Bell products, for arrangements were speedily made whereby Harry began making records for Mr. Hough, and that proved as popular a road to success as The Halls could have done.

In the early days when each record was a master record, it was a great strain upon the artiste when there was a great sale of a popular title.

Harry was the first to sing "Down at the Old Bull and Bush". The air is taken from a song that used to be popular in the U. S. A. with the title of "Under the Anhauser Bush", the Anhauser being a well-known brewery. It was pointed out to the Edison Bell Co. that the air was suited for popularity on record, and a triumvirate of composers put their heads together with the result that thousands of innocent ratepayers for months had to endure the torture of hearing the famous air sung in season and out of season, along the streets, especially about the midnight hour, at street corners, where the whistler exerts his efforts, and in fact everywhere, even where the English language finds itself some thousands of miles away from its birthplace. The trio of composers were, Harry Bluff, Mr. F. W. Robbins, the manager of the Edison Bell factory and warehouse, and Mr. Russell Hunting, of Edison Bell, Sterling, Pathe Freres and other fame. Florrie Forde heard the song on a phonograph, got possession of it, and started it on its popular mission throughout the world.

Harry also went singing in Paris and Lucerne, in Switzerland, where the British colonies of which retain happy memories of his singing.

There is no doubt that some of his best work is in his clever imitations of the late Dan Leno's songs, and it is a

(continued on p. 1314)

NEOPHONE

by F. ANDREWS

NEOPHONE DISC PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

(System Michaelis, and, System White)

THEIR FOUNDING & HISTORY

Dr. William Michaelis, with his brother Alfred Michaelis the founder of the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia in Accomandita, Milano in October, 1904, had both been founder managers of the Gramophone Company (Italy), Limited at Maiden Lane, London and Milano, Italy in 1899. Both left the Gramophone interests, Dr. William Michaelis (a Doctor of Philology) already having "machines" and records manufactured to his process, by March, 1904, by the Uhren-Fabrik-Villingen A.G. at Villingen, Baden, Germany.

It was from Villingen that he applied to the London Patent Office, on 14th. April, 1904, for an invention to be granted Royal Letters Patent No. 8611, part of which reads, in abridgement, as follows:-

"The stylus point is mounted on a bridge piece connected to the Sound-box of the trumpet. Record discs are pressed by applying three or more coats of enamel mixed with boric acid to smoothly prepared surfaces of pulp, papier maché or the like. The Sound-box containing the membrane is mounted upon the sound trumpet of the phonograph and to this Sound-box is attached a bridge piece composed of a readily vibrating material, the radially-formed arm of which constitutes the stylus holder. By means of an aperture in the membrane and a screw, the stylus and stylus holder are brought into adjustable contact with the membrane and to avoid metallic contacts, India rubber washers are provided upon the points of connection."

The word "NEOPHON" was advertised in the Trades Marks Journal as an application for registration as a trade mark, from the Uhren-Fabrik Villingen A. G. and dated 10th. June, 1904. Registration was notified in the following September. (For any readers not speaking German, uhr is a watch or clock. uhrenfabrik is a watch or clock works.)

An article in the 14th. September issue of "Phonographische Zeitschrift" reported that Dr. William Michaelis, in London, had formed the Neophone Disc Phonograph Company and this was seen to be verified by the fact that the trade periodicals in Britain for that month carried the first announcements and advertisements of the Neophone Discs and Machines.

The Neophone Disc Phonograph Company, of Sussex House, Maiden Lane, London W. C., was offering unbreakable vertically (phono)-cut records $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches (19 cm) single sided records for sixpence each and $10\frac{5}{8}$ inches (27 cm) single sided records for one shilling each. Neophone Machine, Model No.2, was advertised at £3 inclusive of one dozen each of the two sizes of discs.

THE NEOPHONE COMPANY, LTD.

The Neophone Company, Limited, registered office 22, Philpot Lane, London E. C., received its certificate of incorporation on 10th. October, 1904, having a nominal capitalisation of £6,000 in £1 shares. The company was formed to acquire from Dr. William Michaelis of Sussex House, Maiden Lane, London, all

rights, title and interest in his Letters Patent No. 8611, relating to Sound Reproducing and Recording Apparatus, Records and the trade mark "NEOPHON" and "NEOPHONE", and to take over as a going concern, the business carried on by Dr. Michaelis, then known as "The Neophone Disc Phonograph Company".

The first Directors of the Company were Dr. William Michaelis, inventor; P. J. Packman, recording expert and musician; W. A. Cameron, gentleman; and Alfred Lionel Maddison, barrister. Dr. Wm Michaelis was the first Chairman of the Company.

An advertisement in the October, 1904 issue of "The Phono Trader & Recorder" showed the trading address of the Neophone Co., Ltd. as being 149-153, Roseberry Avenue, London E. C. where director P. J. Packman was already installed with his own cylinder records business of Pioneer Records under the registered company name of "Lucock and Packman, Limited."

Under the agreement whereby he allowed his patent right to pass to the new company, Dr. Wm. Michaelis received 2,190 fully paid-up shares in the company, making him, by far, the largest shareholder in the company. W. A. Cameron held 200 and Percy J. Packman 100 shares, but the next highest shareholder was Mr. James Morley with 880 and then a Mrs. E. A. Morley, a widow with 495. H. D. Nishett, flautist and musical director for Neophone, who was later to be the conductor of the Royal Military Band on Gramavox Records, in 1911, held 200, and Otto Waetzig, another recording expert at Roseberry Avenue, held 150 shares.

The Company announced that the demand for its products had been so great that it regretted an excusable delay in the execution of orders, which were being taken in strict rotation and fulfilled as promptly as possible.

In December, 1904, with the Roseberry Avenue address given, a "Phono Trader" reporter stated that he had attended a demonstration of the new discs, one of which, vertically-cut, had lasted for ten minutes in playing duration. A disc of eighteen inches was shown to him. All the records were unbreakable, having been made to the patent specifications. Mr. W. A. Cameron was described as the Managing Director of the Company.

The record lists for December, included a large selection of British recordings. At the end of the month, the 30th. it was announced that Mr. J. F. Gray, a pianoforte manufacturer, had become a Director of the Company. The competition to the Neophone discs consisted of Gramophone Records, Gramophone Concert Records, Gramophone Monarch Records, Columbia 7ins., 10ins. and 14ins. records, Nicole Records of 7ins & 10 ins., Zonophone Records of 7ins. & 10ins. and the double-sided Odeon Records of $7\frac{1}{2}$ ins. (19cm) and $10\frac{3}{4}$ ins. (27 cm) diameters.

Four models of the Neophone disc machines were being advertised in January, 1905, ranging from 15 shillings to 4

Guineas. Already it could be seen that at least six differing blocks of serial numbers were in use on the discs. The disc label, "Neophone Phonograph Disc Record - System Dr. Michaelis" was applied for as a trade mark, dated 17th. January, 1905, to the proprietorship of Frederick Read, the Company's secretary. The nominal capital of the company was increased by another £6, 000, by resolution of 10th. January.

February, 1905, brought an advertisement for an attachment which could be used on any disc talking machine to enable the vertical cut Neophone discs to be used ~~thereon~~. The price was fifteen shillings. The Neophone discs were the first vertical cut discs to be offered for sale in Britain, excepting the small wax discs for the Columbia Child's Graphophone and the various discs made for the Stollwerk Chocolate Disc Phonograph.

The word "Neophone" as distinct from "Neophon" was applied for as a registered trade mark in February, 1905, (registered the following May), and Mr. James Morley was appointed to the Board of Directors.

In March, 1905, it was reported that the Neophone Company Limited had taken over the cylinder business of Messrs. Lucock & Packman, Ltd., P. J. Packman being described as the London recording engineer for Neophone Records. The premises had been broken into by burglars who had destroyed a large number of master records and destroyed delicate recording instruments, and the catalogues of unbreakable records which the company had been establishing through weeks of labour, had, in a single night, been made almost useless.

It was also reported that Dr. Wm. Michaelis had entered another application for Letters Patent with reference to talking machines, dated 18th February, 1905. Two new sizes of discs were introduced this March, a 9inch diameter at sixpence each and a 12inch diameter at one shilling each, so, from this month on, the 7½ & 9 inch discs were advertised simply as "small" records and the 10½/8 & 12 inch records as "large" size records.

The registered trade mark "NEOPHON" was transferred from the Uhren-Fabrik Villingen A.G. to the secretary of the Neophone Co., Ltd.

The "Phono Trader" carried an article giving the story of the Neophone Co., Ltd. to date. In April this was followed by some pictures of the works and photographs of some of the personnel.

Monsieur Marsen, of the Opera Comique, praised Neophone Records saying that he was prepared to make some recordings. Both Packman and Waetzig, the recording engineers, were in Milan recording for the Neophone Grand Opera Discs, which were promised for release on 1st. May in the two new sizes, the 12ins to be priced at two shillings each and the 9ins diameter to be at one shilling. It was declared that Packman would then soon leave for a recording trip to India.

Mr. Cameron, the managing director, stated that export business to Canada and the 'colonies' was most satisfactory. There were already established branches of the business in France, Italy, Germany and Russia, with branches in Vienna and Brussels to be opened within a few weeks. They hoped to branch out in the United States of America. The Italian branch had begun business in March and 100 Italian recordings were expected to be placed on the market on 1st. May. These were to known as "Grand Opera Discs". In a month hence, Mr. Packman was expecting to go to India where Neophone discs were in great demand and clients were waiting for local talent recordings.

20inch diameter discs were promised, with extracts from dramatic works, which would play from eight to ten minutes, to be recorded by some of the finest elocutionists of the day. Trial records had been made already with complete success. The records were claimed to be greatly improved and the Company had the facility to produce thousands of records per month & machines having two soundboxes, for vertical and lateral cut discs. All orders were being dealt with promptly.

In May, it was announced that Dr. Wm. Michaelis was busy setting up branches in Austria and Belgium. Patents were being secured in France, Germany, Italy, Russia and the United States, among other countries. Packman and Waetzig were reported to be back in Milan.

The first batch of Italian recordings by "La Scala" artists was put on sale in May, although first listed in April. This series had catalogue numbers ranging from N 20001 to N 20103. In addition to other known series, the British recordings were then being issued with a 2,000, 4,000 and an 8,000 series of catalogue numbers.

From an address in Brussels, Madame Felia Litvinne wrote, on 2nd. May, 1905, a complimentary letter to the company about its discs. This led to the supposition that she had made records for the company. I have no trace that she did, on the other hand there are a number of operatic records with no artist credits, so there is the possibility, however remote, that she did. One must remember that Dr. William's brother in Milan, Alfred Michaelis, was the co-partner in the Societa Italiana di Fonotipia, and there is no knowing how far the bond of brotherly love may have stretched at this time, long before the Erlanger Merchant Bankers took control of Fonotipia! Neophone's Milan singers were La Scala artistes.

Alfred Lionel Maddison, the barrister, resigned from the Board of Directors in June, 1905, and in the same month Packman reported about his second trip to Milan.

In July, 1905, it was to be seen that Emil Waetzig, the brother of Otto, a recording engineer of Berlin, had become a shareholder in the company.

The discs of 18inch diameter, shown to the "Phono Trader" reporter, had never appeared on the market, but in August, 1905, the first issues of the 20inch discs came out, prices at 10 shillings and sixpence each, the largest discs to be issued by any business to date. Another new product was the Home Disc Recording Outfit priced at £1 - 10 shillings each, for making one's own disc recordings.

In September, 1905, the Neophone company could state that 500 recordings had been taken in Italy, made by some of the world's finest artistes. A photograph of Percy Packman was displayed and an interview with him was reported in "The Talking Machine News". The leading tenor of the Madrid Opera, (un-named), while in Milan, had recorded on the 20inch discs for Packman as well as on the standard size Neophones.

The early 7½inch and 10½/8inch discs were now no longer covered by advertisements for "small" and "large" sized records, the Neophone discs were advertised right out as 9inch, 12inch and 20inch discs. Neophone Model VI was put on sale at £7 - 10s.

At the end of September, a meeting of the Directors decided that the Company should be put into voluntary liquidation, that the property and assets be transferred to a trustee, in order that a new company be formed under the style of

Neophone (1905) Limited was incorporated on 22nd. Sept., 1905 with a nominal capital of £70,000 in 35,000 £1 preference shares @ 6% and 35,000 £1 deferred shares. The registered office was at 22. Philpot Lane, London E.C. as of yore.

The Memorandum of the new Company stated that it was formed to acquire from the Neophone Company, Limited, its rights, title and interests, subject to a royalty in favour of Dr. Wm Michaelis, in certain Letters Patent for improvements to Sound producing and recording apparatus, and to records therefore, dated 14th. April, 1904, No.8611, and to various trade marks protecting the words "Neophone" and "Neophon", and to take over as a going concern the Neophone Company Limited of 149 - 153, Roseberry Avenue, London E. C. and at 24, rue des Petites Ecuries, Paris, France.

The Directors of this new company were Dr. William Michaelis, Alexander William Cameron (Manager), Percival James Packman (Recording Engineer), Alexander N. Y. Howell, Edward Browne, William J. Bunday and Frederick Samuel Liddall. The record label, applied for earlier as a trade mark, had been registered the previous month. A Monsieur Henry Aylé of Paris became a substantial shareholder with 700 shares.

In October, Harry Bryan, the celebrated Queen's Hall solo cornetist, appeared on Neophone discs and the 20ins size was featured in the month's publicity.

The Agreement was signed between the former and present Companies which transferred the business as from 12th. October, 1905. The amount of share capital on offer to the public was certified by the Managing Director as £48,000. Dr. William Michaelis held 3,871 shares, with five others holding over 1,000 shares. On 25th. November, by special resolution, it was resolved that the Company name be changed to:-

NEOPHONE LIMITED

This was confirmed at a meeting on 13th. December, and then, on 19th. December, the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies was informed that the business had been transferred from Roseberry Avenue to 1. Worship Street, London E. C. The Registrar confirmed the change of name of the Company on 28th. December. Two more disc records had joined the competition in the meanwhile. These were the variously-sized Beka Records and the blue American Odeon Records.

The new premises at 1. Worship Street were capable of producing 6,000 discs per day. The Board Rooms were on the first floor, the mechanics department was on the second floor. The third floor had more stock rooms and the recording rooms. Some of the artistes recording there that month were members of the San Carlo Opera Company and Leo Stormont and Roland Cunningham.

On 3rd. January, Dr. Wm Michaelis sold his rights for the U. S. A. and his rights in royalties on records to Neophone Limited for which he received 1,250 preference shares and 1,250 deferred shares.

A Mortgage Debenture of £10,000 was created on the Company's property, Goodwill, assets and uncalled capital, the Debentures were in units of £50 each with interest at 5% per annum. 103 were issued in January.

When a representative of "The Sound Wave" paid a visit to the new headquarters of the company he found Mr. E. J. Sabine, the assistant manager, in charge of operations in London, a notable fact being that he had twelve Yost type-

writers for the use of his office staff. Mr. A. C. Tune was the travelling representative. New machines, with 30inch horns, were about to be marketed which would play the 20inch diameter discs. Neophone Discs were being printed in the basement at 1. Worship Street, where Dr. William Michaelis was described as the General Manager.

A certain Mr. G. T. Crane sold his patent rights for Italy and Switzerland, and certain record matrices and other articles to Neophone Limited for 10,100 deferred shares.

Another Assistant Manager now mentioned was Mr. Harry Hinks-Martin, a man well-known in the industry, who had formerly been an Assistant Manager for the Gramophone and Typewriter, Limited.

Accepted on 7th. February, 1906, Dr. W. Michaelis's Letters Patent No. 3425 of 18th. February, 1905, for a disc having a protective peripheral binding composed of metal in the form of half hoops, the edges of which are turned over to embrace the sides of the discs.

Seven types of Neophone discs were now on sale -	
20 inch diam.	@ 10 shillings 6 pence
12 " " Grand Opera "Autograph"	@ 5 s.
9 " " " " "	@ 2 s. 6 d.
12 " " Grand Opera	@ 2 s.
9 " " " " "	@ 1 s.
12 " " Standard w. metal rims	@ 1 s. 6 d.
12 " " Standard	@ 1 s.
9 " " " " "	@ 6 pence

The operatic singers mentioned in connection with the "autographed" records were Guglielmo Nicol, Alfredo Costa, Dante Zucchi, Paolo Wualman, Emma Zaccaria and Emma Trentini.

Mr. J. R. S. Nield, who had been elected to the Board of Neophone Company, Ltd., after it had been put into Liquidation, had bought 250 shares in the new company in January, following up in March by buying another 4,750 shares, making him one of the largest shareholders. On 21st. March it was announced that the registered trade mark of the label had been transferred from the Company Secretary to Neophone, Ltd.

More news of staff members, this month, revealed that Mr. E. J. Sabine had begun working with the Columbia Phonograph Co., Gen'l. in London in 1900, later going to the Berlin branch of the business. He later joined the National Phonograph Company, Limited, the proprietors of the Edison phonograph business in Britain and Europe. He joined Dr. Michaelis as his assistant manager on the founding of the Neophone business. He was now about to go to France to take over the Managership of the French branch of the Neophone enterprise. His position in London was to be taken by his brother J. A. Sabine who, recently, had also been with Columbia in Berlin. Harry Hinks-Martin, one of the Managers was now stated to have been in the employ of the Edison Bell Phonograph Corporation, Ltd. in 1894.

Señor Mario Massa's recordings were issued this month. To boost sales of their discs, another reproducer/soundbox was put on sale which enabled the Neophone discs to be played on any type of disc machine. This was the "Repro-Neo" priced at 15 shillings each.

"Neolite" for disc records was filed as an application for a registered trade mark to Neophone Limited on 5th. April, 1906. The venture was now two years old.

NEOPHONES NEED NO NEEDLES

UNIVERSAL SOUNDBOX
(Instructions)

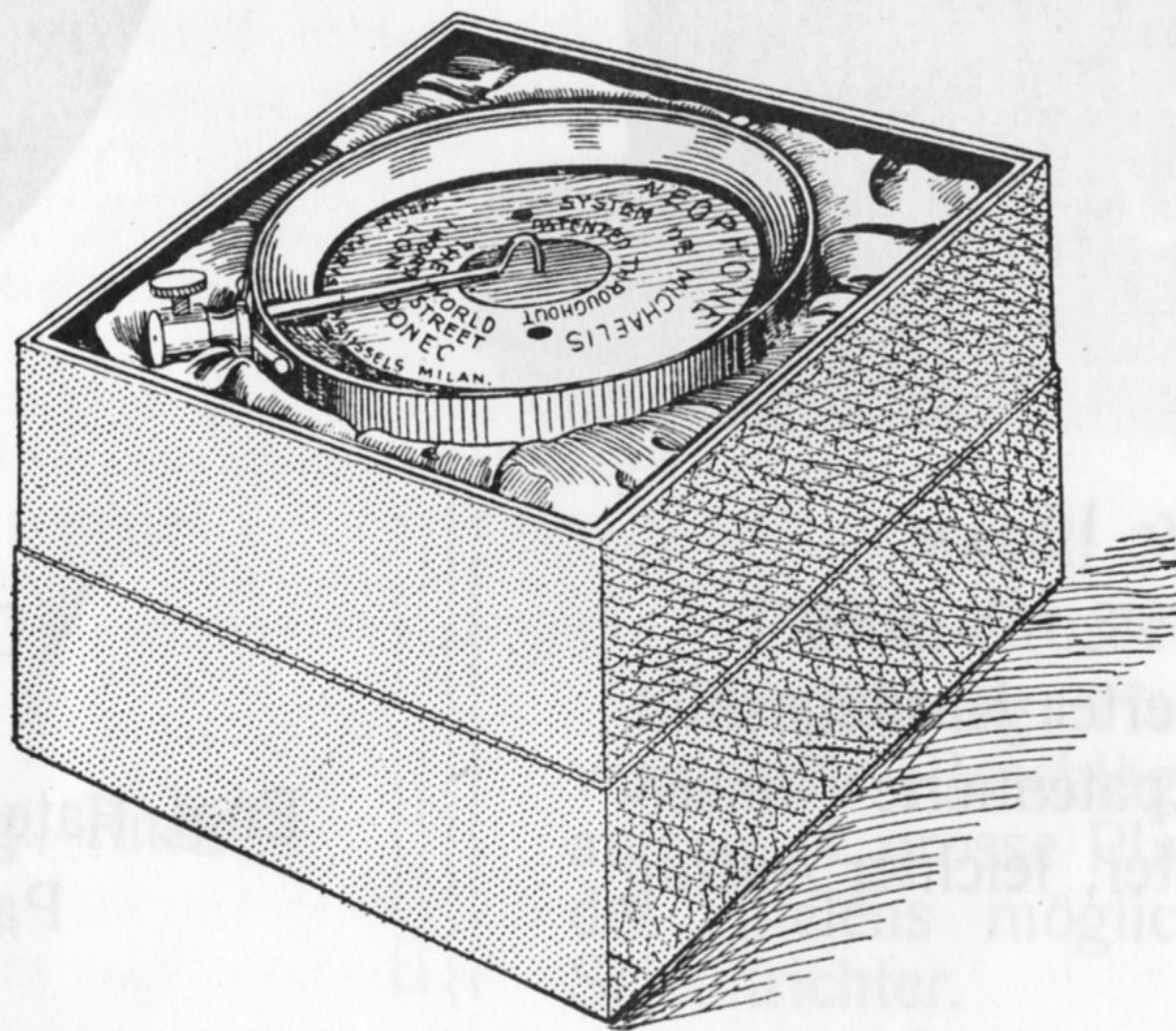
NEOPHONE LIMITED.

(SYSTEM *Dr. Michaelis*)

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

BRANCHES
PARIS, MILAN, BERLIN, SYDNEY,
TORONTO, TOKIO, KOBE, BRUSSELS.

NEOPHONE LIMITED,



Neolite Universal Reproducer.

Complete in handsome box.

Price 21/-

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

THE .. NEOLITE .. UNIVERSAL REPRODUCER.



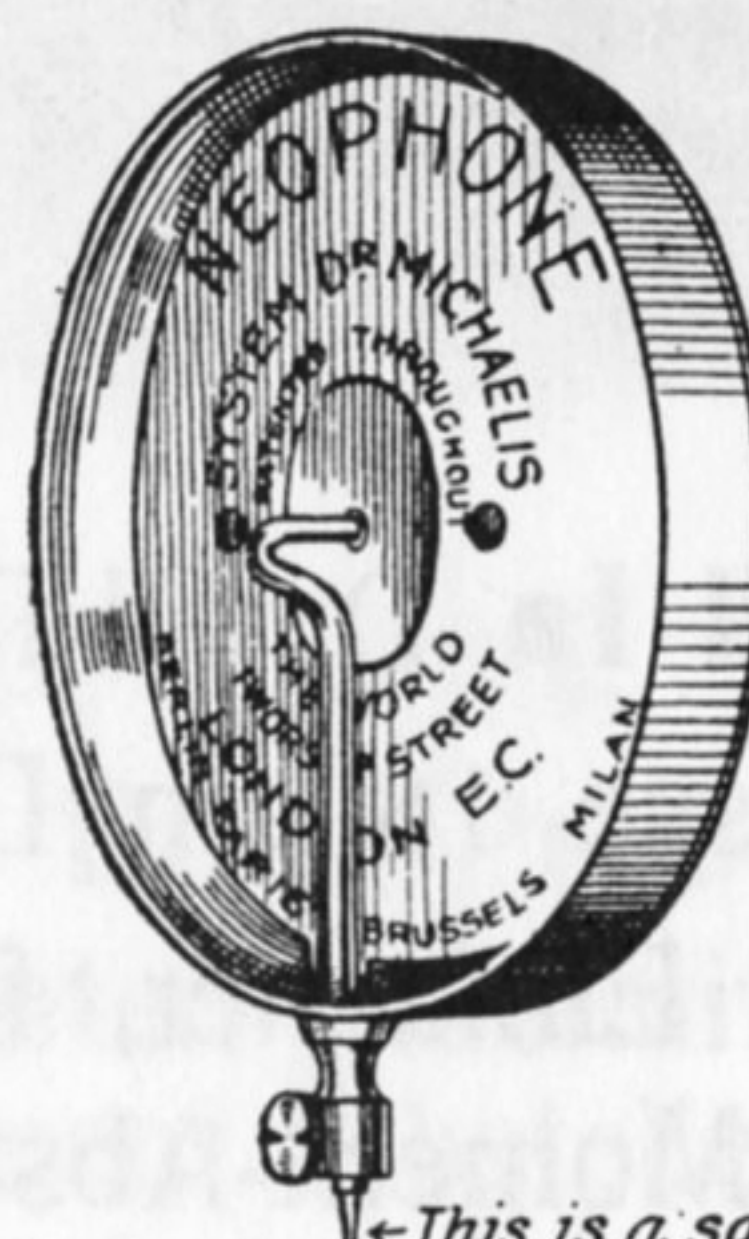
Neophone Limited,
The Only Disc-Phonograph

(System Dr. Michaelis),

1, Worship Street, Finsbury Square,
LONDON.

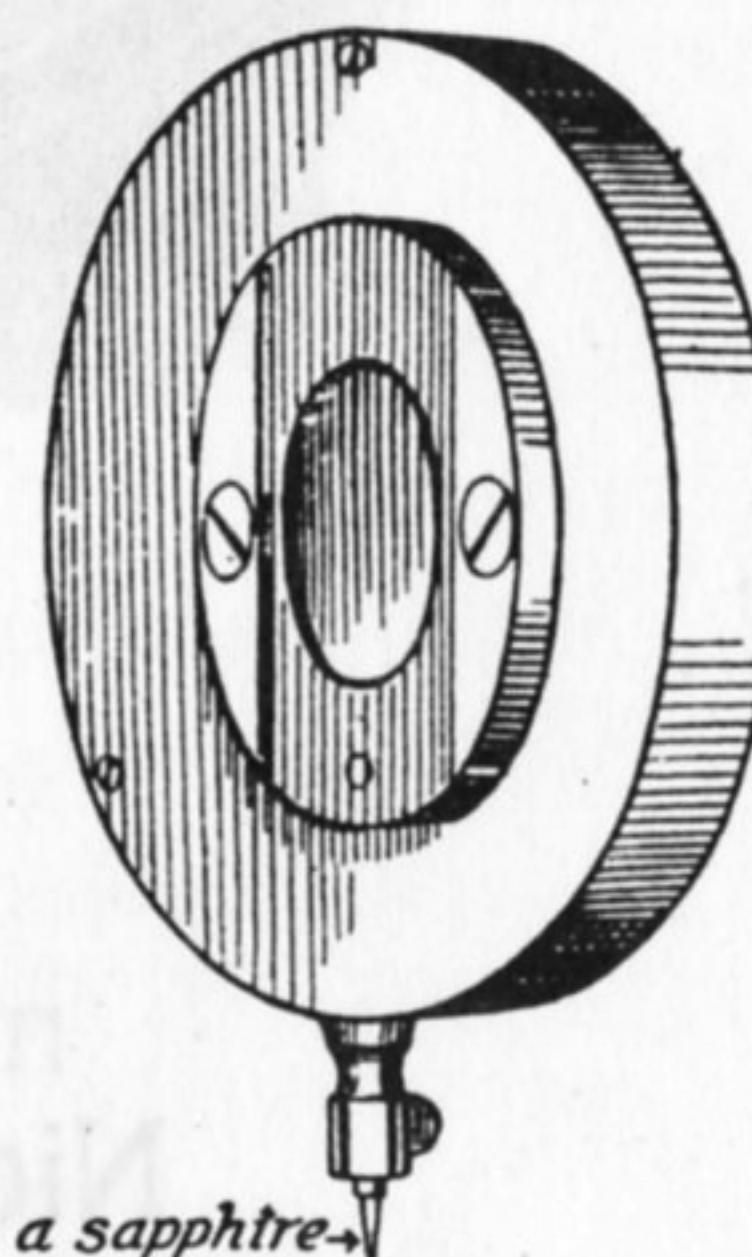
NEOPHONE LIMITED,

Neolite Universal Réproducteur.



← This is a sapphire
not a needle

Front View.



This is a sapphire
not a needle.

Back View.

The back view shows the slot into which the various fittings are fixed.

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

„NEOPHON“ Plattenphonograph

(System Dr. Michaelis.)

Seit der vor einigen Jahren erfolgten Einführung der Plattensprechmaschinen hat keine Neuerung auf diesem Gebiete in fachmännischen Kreisen die Anerkennung gefunden wie unser seit Kurzem in den Handel gebrachter **Plattenphonograph Neophon**. Die Abschlüsse, die wir bereits mit grossen in der Sprechmaschinenbranche massgebenden Firmen zustande gebracht haben, beweisen zur Genüge, dass der **Plattenphonograph in Wirklichkeit die Zukunftssprechmaschine** ist. Die besonderen Vorteile des Neophon haben wir bereits in unseren ersten Anzeigen hervorgehoben, nämlich, keine voluminösen Wachsrollen, keine schweren zerbrechlichen und teuren Platten, kein Nadelwechseln mehr.

NEOPHON (der Plattenphonograph) hat konkurrenzlos billige, leichte, garantiert vollständig unzerbrechliche, unverwüstliche, jedoch an Tonfülle unübertroffene Platten.

(Für weitere technische Beschreibung des Neophon verweisen wir auf den redaktionellen Teil der „Phonographischen Zeitschrift.“)

Die folgenden Modelle (Detailpreise für Deutschland) sind zum Versand fertig:

Trade-Märke.



Modell 1a Detail-Preis Mk. 15,—

Platten-Grösse 18 cm Detail-Preis Mk. 0,60

Ausführung. Einfacher, fein polierter Kasten, solid, Nickelbeschlag, Moment-Absteller, patentierte unzerbrechliche Saphirmembrane, senkrechter, leichter Aufzug und Aluminium-Schalltrichter.

Codeword: Apollo.

Anmerkung: Es wird besonders vor Missbrauch des Namens „Neophon“ gewarnt, der in allen Industriestaaten gesetzl. geschützt ist. — Wir erbitten Anfragen wegen Alleinverkaufs nur von Grosshandlungen, da wir nur bei kontraktlich verpflichteter Abnahme für grössere Distrikte Exklusivität gewähren.



Schutz in allen Kulturstaaten.

D. R. G. M. — D. R. Patent angem.

B. S. G. D. G. No. 333009

Engl. Patent No. 8611. Angem. in Oesterr.-Ung., Russl.

Patente in Italien, Schweiz, Belgien etc.



Modell 2a Detail-Preis Mk. 30,—

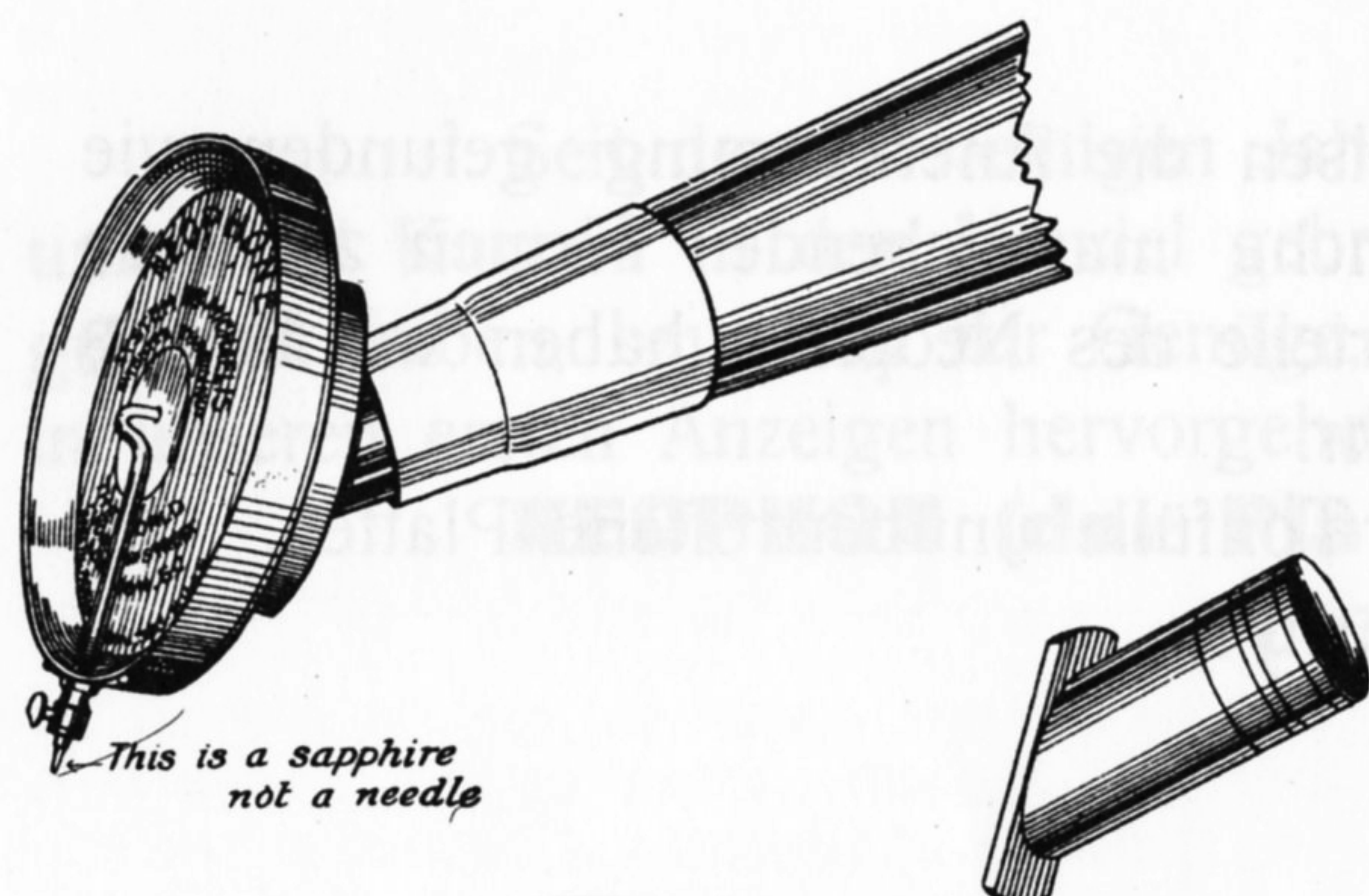
Platten-Grösse 25 cm Detail-Preis Mk. 1,—

Ausführung: Hocheleganter, geschnitzter Kasten, fein vernickelte Beschläge, Moment-Absteller, Kurbelseiten-aufzug, 4 grosse Platten durchziehend, Aufzug während des Spielens möglich, grosser ff. polierter Aluminium-Schalltrichter.

Codeword: Achilles.

Uhrenfabrik Villingen A.-G., Villingen.

NEOPHONE LIMITED,



Neolite Universal Reproducer fitted to tone-arm, adjusted for playing Neolite records.

The small sketch shows the fitting used.

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

NEOPHONE LIMITED,

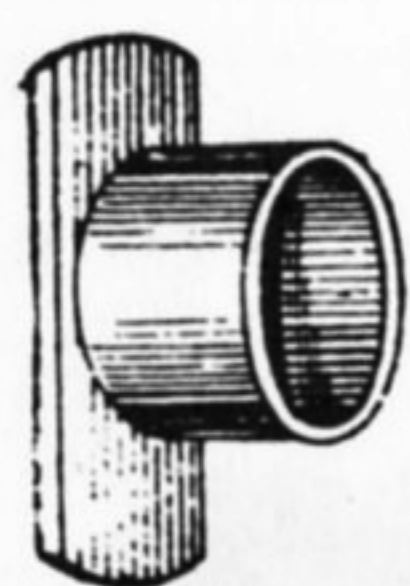


Fig. 1.

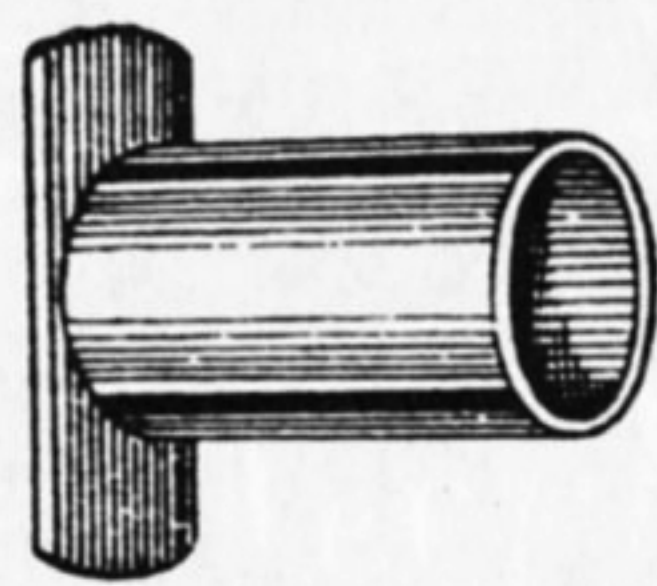


Fig. 2.

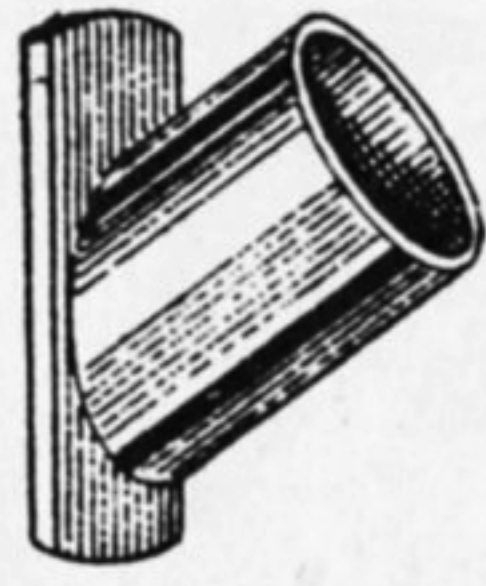


Fig. 3.

Extra Fittings for Neolite Reproducer.

Fig. 1. For fitting Neolite Reproducer to Tone Arm Machines of other makes, for playing ordinary disc records.

Fig. 2. For fitting Neolite Reproducer to other makes of machines with leather elbow for playing ordinary disc records.

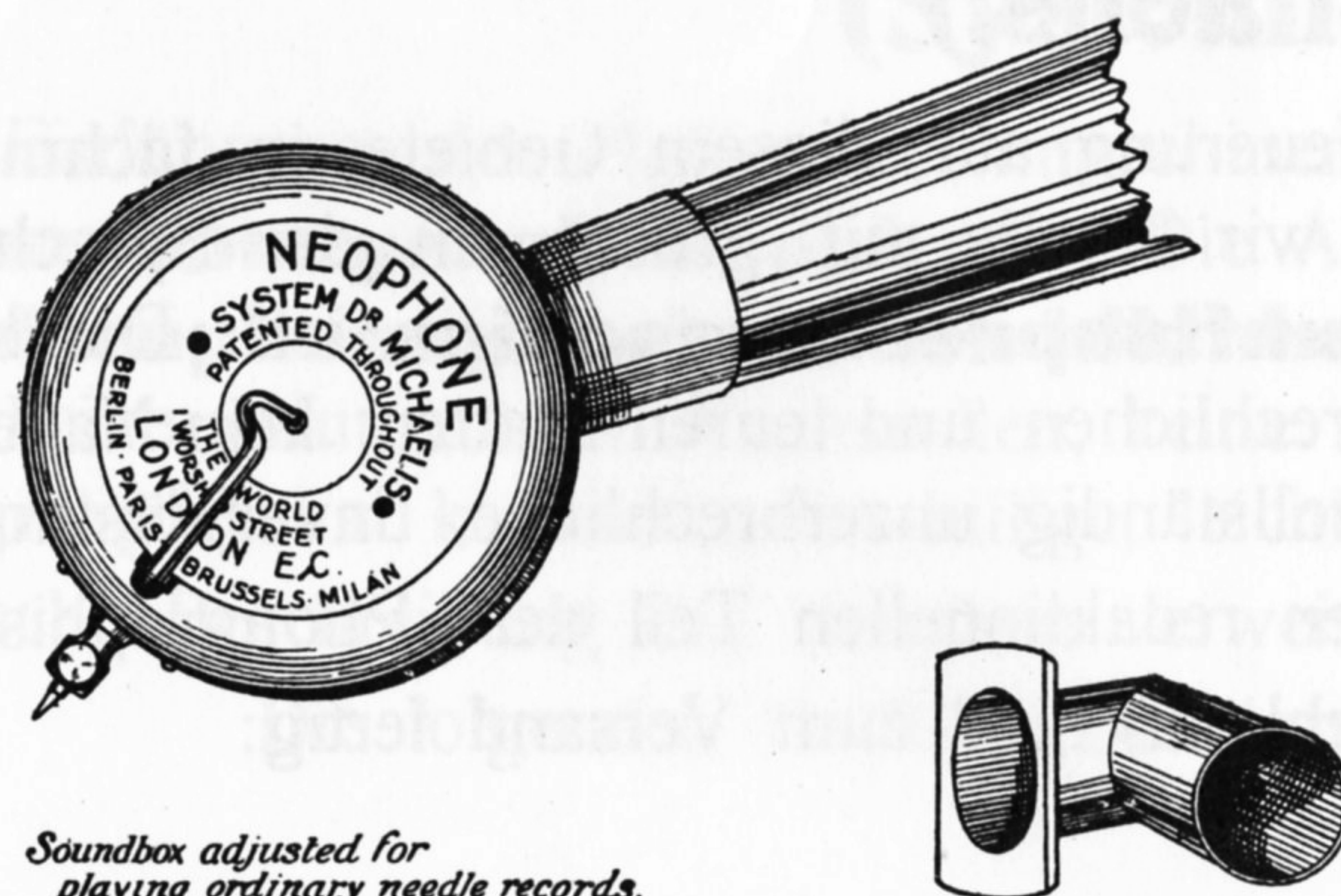
Fig. 3. For fitting Neolite Reproducer to Tone Arm Machines of other makes for playing Neolite records.

Note.—An Attachment can also be supplied for enabling the Neolite Reproducer to be fitted to "leather elbow" machines for playing Neolite records.

Any of these fittings will be supplied free with the NEOLITE REPRODUCER.

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

NEOPHONE LIMITED,



Neolite Universal Reproducer adjusted for playing ordinary needle records.

The small sketch shows the fitting used.

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

NEOPHONE LIMITED,

The Neolite Universal Reproducer is the most perfect Soundbox ever produced.

It not only plays Neolite Disc Records on any make of machine with either the sapphire or ordinary needle, but by means of the various Attachments described herein it will play ordinary disc records on any disc machine, with best results.

If you already possess a disc machine, fit a **Neolite Universal Reproducer**, and you will be delighted with the improved tone of your records.

Price (complete) 21/-

1, WORSHIP STREET, FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON.

The Company secretary, Frederick Read, as Liquidator, reported the first Winding Up Meeting of the former Neophone Company Limited. Of the £12,000 capital of that company, £7,500 had been paid in cash, the remainder issued as fully paid up shares.

RESIGNATIONS

Messrs. Packman, Howell and Liddall resigned from Neophone Limited on 1st. May, 1906, Liddall becoming the Company secretary.

The Board now consisted of Dr. Wm. Michaelis, W. A. Cameron, E. Browne and the new large shareholder, J.R.J. Nield.

A record list, published in one of the periodicals in May, showed that the Neophone discs were now carrying labels of "Wedgwood" blue and white. Other colour schemes, such as grey and white, and black and white had already been in use, but title and artiste details had been inscribed in the area surrounding the label. With the introduction of the new label, many of the extant records in the catalogue were re-recorded to bring them up to the latest standard of Neophone recording.

Mr. Cameron, the Managing Director, was in New York City attempting to open up a business in Neophone Machines and Records, the intention being to manufacture discs there. He established an office in New York with the hope of an American Neophone Company being formed there. Marie Dressler, the actress, is reported to have visited the office.

"NEW" Neophone Disc Records were to be put on sale. A new company, registered in Britain, was the "Compagnie Belge du Neophone, Ltd." having a nominal capital of £20,000 in £1 shares.

In June, Frederick Read, the ex-company secretary, as the registered owner of the word "Neophone" was addressed as at 22. Tabernacle Street, London E. C. The "Phono Trader" published an article devoted to Neophone Limited with pictures of the premises at Worship Street and the portraits of Michael Michaelis, Hinks-Martin and J. A. Sabine. E. J. Sabine was reported as being in charge of the new Compagnie Belge du Neophone, Ltd.

The "Neolite Disc Phonograph Records, of 12ins. double-sided, were first issued in June, 1906, priced at 3 shillings each. These were black coloured records of a light solid stock of a proprietary material which Neophone Limited called "Neolite". The white enamelled faced single side recordings continued as alternative cheap "buys" of the new recordings. A 'Neolite' Exhibition sound box, value £1 - 1s. was given to every purchaser of twelve Neolite discs.

Dr. William Michaelis was reported to have become a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

In Australia, Messrs. Tozer, Kemsley and Fisher, of Melbourne and Sydney were the appointed Australasian Agents for Neophone Products.

In July, 1906, the registered trade marks of "Neophon" and "Neophone" were transferred to Neophone Limited from the ex-company secretary, Frederick Read.

During September, "Neolite" received its registration as a trade mark. On 6th of the month another application had been filed for yet another trade mark. This time it was for "Neograph", for sound recorders and reproducers.

Some business in Neophone was reported to have opened up in Toronto, Canada, while Dr. Wm Michaelis had gone to Milan,

Italy to visit his brother Alfred in Milan who was suffering a period of ill-health.

E. J. Sabine was appointed to a new post as Branch Manager in Manchester, which was a wholesale depot.

On 22nd September, 1906, a further application for a trade mark was filed, the name chosen this time being "Neoflora", also with respect to sound reproducers and recorders. A new Agency had been appointed in Australia, Messrs. Mason & Bohanna taking over from Messrs. Tozer, Kemsley & Fisher.

The business structure of Neophone was an ever-changing one. In October, 1906, it was reported that Neophone businesses had become established in Japan, at Tokyo and Kobe.

The staff in London, at this time, was given as James Morley as Vice-Chairman; E. J. Sabine, Manchester Manager; Harry Hinks-Martin, Manager; Constantin Craies, Managing Director; A. W. Cameron, Director; P. J. Packman and Otto Waetzig, Recording Engineers; N. D. Nisbet, Musical Director, (Nesbit had been with the Company since 1904), Mr. A. F. Dubbins, pianist; Mr. F. Bragg, A. C. Tune and H. Klein (late of Henry Klein & Co., the New Polyphon Supply Co., Ltd. and Nicole Freres Ltd.). Dr. William Michaelis was still the Chairman.

The stockholding in the company also showed considerable changes. At 27th. November, 1906, Edward Browne was far and away the largest individual shareholder with 7,300 shares, next came J. R. J. Nield with 5,000; Cameron with 2,961, Packman with 1,235 and Monsieur Aylé of Paris with his 700. Michaelis, Howell, Morley and Cameron had each sold some of their shares to Edward Browne.

The Board consisted of Michaelis, Browne, Cameron, Nield, Morley and the new-comer Constantin Craies, already in business on his own account, and who was later to be joined by Stavridi, in a business which was to feature its Apollo machines.

Advertisements in November informed that dealers holding old stocks of the old type Neophone discs could return them for full credit in exchange for the new products. Only 12inch "Neolite" Neophone Discs and 9inch Neophone Disc Phonograph Records were now advertised, at 3 shillings each and sixpence each respectively.

The first direct challenge to Neophone's monopoly in the vertical cut disc record came in November with the announcement by Pathe Freres of London that they were introducing the Pathe Disc of 11 inches diameter, single-sided.

Mr. Klein's employment at Neophone resulted in some new masters being cut with his finer groove. Such masters were demonstrated by Packman who had put them to use as "Neolite" Neophones. The advertisement for that particular type of disc that month showed that the discs bore gold-coloured labels. The white enamelled 9inch discs still had the "Wedgwood" blue and white labels, but they were later used on the black "Neolite" Neophone discs.

At the end of the year 1906 the competition to Neophone discs consisted of Columbia 7, 10 and 12 - inch records; Gramophone 7, 10, and 12 - inch records; Zonophone 7 and 10 - inch records; Odeon 7½, 10½, 12 and 13½ - inch records; Fonotipia 10½, 12, 13½ - inch records; Beka Records of various sizes; Favorite Records; Homophone Records; Imperial Records; Globos Records and a still very flourishing cylinder industry.

In January, 1907, only the Neolite Discs were advertised and on 1st. February a meeting of the Company resolved upon the

voluntary winding up of the business, with Constantin Craies, the Managing Director, being appointed the liquidator. The assistant manager, J. A. Sabine, had already re-joined the Columbia Phonograph Company, Gen'l.

The advertisements for this month made the point that each side of a Neolite record played for four minutes, this was little different from any other 12inch diameter disc.

Mr. Klein was now described as Recording Expert for the Company which had brought in a Mr. J. H. Duncan, F. C. A. to help in the reconstruction of the financial side of the business.

THE INTERNATIONAL NEOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED

On 4th. February, 1907, the International Neophone Co., Ltd. was founded with a nominal capitalisation of £2,000, formed to take over the patents for the "rest of the world" from Neophone Limited. The registered office of this new Company was at 2. Tabernacle Street, London E.C., the address of the former secretary Frederick Read. The new company was to be headed by Dr. William Michaelis, E. J. Sabine and Otto Waetzig, who was to tour the Far-East on a recording mission.

The company proposed to form subsidiaries in all parts of the world. The Board of Directors consisted of Michaelis, J. Morley, F. S. Liddall, the latter being the Company Secretary. The company ceased doing business in 1908, it having been active for about only twelve months.

"NEOGRAPH" was registered to Neophone Limited in March, 1907, the trade having been informed through the periodicals that the company had now passed into voluntary liquidation and was trying to reconstruct itself.

Mr. T. S. Aldridge, formerly with the Gramophone and Typewriter, Limited, joined Neophone Limited to take charge of the shipping department.

On 28th. March, Mr. G. H. Gordon Nordaby replaced Constantin Craies as Liquidator.

In April, it was reported that Mr. A. S. Taylor, newly in charge of the Neophone Limited Recording Department, had been recording the Greek singer Jean Cokkins, for the Levantine Markets. Taylor had also recorded an arioso from "Pagliacci" and "La Donna e mobile" from "Rigoletto".

Two more staff members were reported to have left Neophone for the Columbia Phonograph Co., Gen'l; Mr. H. T. Bristow, the Eastern Counties Neophone representative and Mr. T. F. Bragg. The latter had been Exports Manager, his new appointment was as Superintendant of the Columbia Phonograph Co. General's Shipping Department.

Three types of record were advertised this month, by The International Neophone Record Co., Ltd., the 20inch diameter discs, now double-sided, at 15 shillings; the 12inch disc; made of Neolite at 3 shillings; and the 9inch cardboard discs 6d. each. There is no further information on the 20inch discs.

NEOPHONE PHONOGRAPH DISC RECORD (SYSTEM WHITE)

In July, 1907, it was announced that the business of Neophone Limited had been sold to the General Phonograph Co. Ltd the Managing Director of which was James White, an American who had worked in Edison's Laboratory before the improved phono-graph had been constructed. He had been the first head of Edison's European business, and the Manager of the National Phonograph Company, Limited, when it commenced a business

in Edison machines and cylinder records in May, 1903.

At the time of the acquisition of the Neophone business, the General Phonograph Co., Ltd. was producing the two-minute, gold-moulded "White Record" and had been carrying out experiments in producing an eleven-inch disc record made by a "gold - moulded" process.

Under this new ownership, the White Record Artists were to be recorded for the future Neophone Discs which were to be produced under Mr. White's gold-moulded process, he having already announced his own "White" disc records, trials of which had been heard, but which were now abandoned in favour of continuing the name of "Neophone".

In August, 1907 it was declared that all of the Neophone stock and plant was to go to the General Phonograph Co., Ltd., these assets having been sold by the Receiver for the sum of £4,115. Much of this stock the General Phonograph Co., Ltd. offered at "Specially Reduced Prices". This included disc machine complete. 100 of Model 1, 1,104 of Model 2, 253 of Model 6, 5 of the "Grand Neophone". There were 1,120 Home Recording Outfits and 8,000 Neolite Records. Machines minus tonearms and horns were 1,217 of No.2, 397 of No.5, 211 of No. 7.

On its own part, The General Phonograph Co., Ltd. offered a new tonearm and sound box which allowed records of both vertical and lateral cuts to be reproduced by means of a simple adjustment.

Also advertised were the new "Neophone Disc Record - System White", at 3 shillings each, made by the "White" system and 11inches (?) in diameter. The records were advertised from August to December, 1907, from 1. Worship Street. These appear to have been 12 inches in size later.

In December, 1907, Mr. H. Gordon Nordaby, the Liquidator of Neophone Limited, was asking the creditors of the Company to send in their claims by 31st. December, 1908.

The disc competition now consisted of Beka, Columbia, Favorite, Fonotipia, Gramophone, Homophone, Imperial, Lyrophone Melograph, Odeon, Pathé, Sovereign, Star, and Zonophone Records.

The General Phonograph Co., Ltd. had an arrangement to handle all Neophone Goods abroad, except in Germany, on behalf of the International Neophone Co., Ltd. which, in October, 1907, reported to be doing a very large trade in the Neophone Disc Record - White gold-moulded system. A Winter Campaign had been arranged with a full staff of 'travellers'. Recordings had been taken in Kristiana, Norway.

In February, 1908, the Liquidator of Neophone Limited wrote a letter which explained that the assets had been sold by the Receiver for a sum which proved insufficient to satisfy the Debenture Holders. None of the property had come into his possession. His report of 5th. March, 1908, put the Assets of Neophone Limited at nil, with liabilities at £10,000 to Debenture Holders and £19,000 to unsecured creditors. The total amount of capital paid up at the commencement of the Winding Up of the Company had been £23,777. Other shares had been issued as fully paid up to a total of 30,600 £1 shares.

The final Winding Up meeting of Neophone Limited took place on 28th. July, 1908. Apparently, under an agreement of 10th. February, 1908, John R. J. Nield, who had been a Director of Neophone Limited since May, 1906, sold to the General Phonograph Company the Letters Patent, Trade Marks, Stock-in-Trade and other assets of Neophone Limited.

Mr. George T. Crane and Mr. Alfred Barrett had been associated with the deal. The selling price was put at £24,115 to be met as £4,115 in cash and £20,000 in fully paid up shares in the General Phonograph Co., Ltd. John R. J. Nield had submitted a tender for the assets of Neophone Limited, in Liquidation, which its Receiver and Manager had been authorised to sell. Nield's tender met with the Court's approval and that is how he became in possession of the assets which he was able to sell by the agreement of 10th. February, 1908.

As a part of their agreement, the General Phonograph Co. Ltd. agreed not to issue Debentures in excess of £30,000 ranking in priority to those already issued. Nield had the right to appoint two Directors to the Board of the General Phonograph Co., Ltd., one of whom could have been himself, and he also had the right to approve two officials to assist in the running of the Company's business, whose duties would be defined, from time to time, by the General Board Meetings.

It was deemed that by keeping the business of Neophone Limited going from 1st. June, 1907, to 30th. July, 1907, J. R. Nield had acted on behalf of the General Phonograph Co., Ltd.

Of the 20,000 £1 shares received under the agreement, Nield held 12,934. The Schedule to the agreement of 10th. February, 1908, included the earlier agreed date of 31st. July, 1907, itemised what the General Phonograph Co., Ltd. had purchased from Neophone Limited, in Liquidation, via J. R. J. Nield. It consisted of the whole of the machinery, plant, tools and appliances at No. 1. Worship Street, London, E C, and at 5. Sidney Grove, London E C, for the manufacture and fitting of talking machines, horns, recording machines, cardboard and Neolite records; two electric motors of 10 h.p. and 3½ h.p.; a three-ram pump, and a single-ram pump; one six ton accumulator, six hydraulic presses, 15 pairs of press plates for the presses, one large double-sided embossing press, one small embossing press, 19 steel plates for embossing presses, one pressing machine, one cutting machine, six heating tables, two trimming lathes, two electric fans, one 4 h.p. vertical boiler together with shafting, belts, benches and other sundry items and tools. The whole of the recording apparatus in the three recording rooms, one piano, two complete recording machines, 17 recording horns, 61 recording diaphragms, 5 complete cylinder duplicating machines, one copper depositing bath, one 4 volt dynamo, together with music stands, band stools and sundry apparatus for recording orchestral and solo pieces.

All the machinery and appliances at 5, Sidney Grove for the making of wax moulds, notably one 1 h.p. motor, three 12-inch master shaving machines, one 20 inch master shaving machine, 68 master moulds ranging from 9 inches to 20 inches diameters, together with cauldrons and gas fittings for melting and mixing wax.

All the apparatus for fitting and repairing talking machines, notably lathes. All the wax matrices for records and working galvanos for the printing and reproduction of the songs orchestral and other instrumental pieces published by Neophone Limited, which included 1,564 galvanos of varying kinds and in stages of use.

All the stock-in-trade at 1. Worship Street and 5. Tabernacle Street in London and at Manchester, consisting of completed and parts of Neophone Disc machines, 7,780 Neolite discs ready for sale (double-sided), 3,600 cardboard single-sided discs in varying sizes from 9 to 20 inches diameter, together with raw material and packing material.

All the office furniture, stationery, catalogues, etc.

and one hat-and-umbrella stand (!).

The Goodwill and Connections.

The right to lease 1. Worship Street with 20 years to run. Premises of 7,500 superficial feet, £600 rent per annum, subject to four rooms let out to James Morley, a solicitor, (Director of Neophone Limited) at £100 per annum.

The Letters Patent in the British Isles, Australia, Cape Colony, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, France, Hungary, India, Italy, Spain and The Transvaal.

The Trade Marks in the British Isles and the above countries, with the addition of Brazil, Denmark, Greece, Holland, Jamaica, Jersey, Luxemburg, Mexico, Natal, Norway, The Orange Colony, Portugal, Sweden and Turkey.

The contracts arranged between the International Neophone Co., Ltd. and the Sole Agent for the Cape Colony, Natal, the Orange River Colony, Rhodesia and the Transvaal, who was B. S. Hart, appointed on 22nd. February, 1907.

The contracts arranged between Neophone Limited and Tom Mason, George Mason and Scott Bohanna as Sole Agents for Australasia, dated 29th. June, 1907.

The contracts between J. H. Duncan and the International Neophone Co., Ltd. giving authority to negotiate subsidiary companies, dated February, 1907.

The contracts for February, March and April, 1907, between J. H. Duncan and the International Neophone Co., Ltd. arranging the sale of goods and the setting up of agencies in foreign countries.

(Editor's comment. In listing the goods & chattels, contracts, etc. we hope, as well as telling the Neophone story, that we have given a glimpse behind the scenes of the physical things constituting any record company at the same period.)

THE END OF THE NEOPHONE BUSINESS.

On 13th. April, 1908, the General Phonograph Company, Ltd. resolved to voluntarily wind up its affairs. Mr. H. G. Yorke a Director of the Company, was appointed Liquidator. This followed upon the appointment of Mr. A. Dangerfield as a Receiver and Manager of the business on 28th. February, 1908, which appointment came through a Court Order issued from the Chancery Division of the High Court of Judicature, obtained on the petition of a Mr. George Charles Howard.

The failure of this company ended the life of Neophone Records and disc machines. The General Phonograph Co., Ltd. was finally wound up on 26th. April, 1912. The registered trade marks finally disappeared from the Trade Mark Register as there was nobody with any interest in them who would wish to maintain the registrations.

The International Neophone Co., Ltd. stated in March. 1910, that it had done no business for 12 to 18 months & was struck from the Companies Register on 21st. Feb. 1911, by a notice in the London Gazette.

* * * * *

This article will continue in future issues and will comprise 'A Story behind the Main Story'; pictures of Neophone advertisements and reprints of rare Neophone catalogues of "machines" & discs, (not listed in Bauer nor Girard & Barnes).

safe thing to suggest to our readers that they hear his latest Leno contribution "The Jap" on Favorite. His unrivalled experience makes him of the greatest value in his present position of musical director of the Favorite Company.

RECORD WEAR

Shirrell Heath, Hampshire.

Dear Ernie Bayly,

It seems to be popularly believed that the quickest way to ruin a gramophone record (other than jumping upon it) is to play it upon an acoustic gramophone.

This strikes me as sad. I have several acoustic machines and like to hear records played on the appropriate gramophones of the period, as do many people who come to the shows where my wife and I demonstrate bygone methods of entertainment (with gramophones).

So was I ruining my records? I have been cautioned that every time I play one on an acoustic machine using a steel needle I reduce the value of the record. I have read that after 100 plays a 78 rpm record will usually be in pretty poor shape. That is all very worrying, you will agree. It seemed there were two alternatives open to me, play them on a modern electric machine with a lightweight pickup, which does not sound the same, or tape-record my records and play the tape recorder. Neither as much fun compared with a Zonophone 'Champion' or a 'Victrola'.

Something had to be done to settle the matter, so I undertook a few simple experiments.

Firstly I played the same few grooves of a record 100 times, it was rather monotonous, but the results were interesting. There was no visible sign of this part being any different from the rest of the record! It also sounded quite normal. The needle was left unchanged also, it had been played the equivalent of 6 to 8 record sides of ten-inch diameter. The record was a Decca** which had a large chunk out of the edge, otherwise it was in excellent condition. Next I broke the record and put a piece which

NEEDLES & PINS

Poole,
Dorset.

Dear Mr. Bayly,

As promised, here are a few comments on needles as made by our family firm.

Harding Rhodes, Ltd. was a Leeds company mainly concerned in the manufacture of combing pins for the woollen trade. These pins attached to rollers combed the sheep's fleeces into long strands for making into yarn.

When gramophones became popular it was evident that there was a marked similarity between the pins that went between the soundbox and the record and the textile pins with which they were so familiar so they got down to business in a big way. In time my uncle, James Rhodes obtained from Louis Sterling, then head of Columbia Records in Britain, the contract to make Columbia needles and this they did right through the 1920's and 1930's. The numbers were huge, running into hundreds of millions.

The raw material consisted of rolls of steel, from memory at least an inch thick in diameter, which

Mr. Harth, the astute representative of that powerful firm, recognised this with his usual acumen, and the combination thus existing has resulted in some very good lists of titles from the Favorite firm.

J. BOURNE

had been played 100 times under my microscope, it was still impossible to see any difference between this and another piece which had not been subjected to the test.

I made for my commonly-used machines, counter balance arms to reduce the load by more than 50% and still get identical performance.

Examination of needles shows that when used without counter-balance they wear to a chisel point having unequal facets, the larger of the two being equal to the depth of the record groove. The needle used with counter-balance weight shows very little wear at all. This would certainly suggest that the record wear is similarly reduced.

I always change the needle after playing only one side of a record of course. I feel less worried than before. There are few records that get played more than six times per year, so they should last a long time yet. I conclude that abuse, not use, is the culprit; use of old needles, grit, etc.

Sincerely,

John Bourne

** I do not want to spoil the thesis above, but wonder if some makes of records are more prone to "wear" than others. Was any period of time similarly prone? Both of which might need an analytical chemist. Also, do early pickups wear records more or less than acoustic soundboxes. Among collections of records that one buys up, one often finds some obviously "worn", but which otherwise look clean and in clean packets.

Ernie Bayly

R. MOUNTFORD

were reduced by drawing down to the thickness required. I cannot recall how the points were formed but I do recall the needles being cut to the required length and polished by being tumbled together in boxes with abrasives. They were measured into their tins of 200 by weight.

From memory there were four grades of thickness, the thickest playing the loudest, although volume could also be controlled to some extent by the depth of insertion into the soundbox. The softest grade Columbia needles had a flat pressed into them, presumably to help carry the weight of the sound box. There were no 1.5 gram loadings in those days - more like a couple of ounces!

The tins had a black paper insert carrying the warning 'Use once only' and five tins were put into cardboard boxes to make up packs of a thousand needles. Although I always had a free supply of needles I did, in fact, use them twice on the principle that if they were good enough for one side of a twelve inch record they ought to last for two ten inch sides.

From memory the retail selling price of 200 needles was 9d. though Woolworths sold their 'Songster' brand for the

traditional sixpence. H M V needles were made by a firm at Redditch, which was, certainly in those days, the leading centre of the needle, pin and hook trade. 'Songster' needles were made at Sheffield.

Although the term needle has always been used in the gramophone context they were in fact pins and were always referred to as such within Harding Rhodes. A needle, correctly, is a pin with a hole in it as for example a sewing or a hypodermic needle.

I have written to my "old firm" of Hardings of Leeds, as it is known today, for more information. Mr. Hal Sykes, a Director has sent the following notes.....

"In our heyday we were probably the largest gramophone pin manufacturer in the world.

The process of making these pins was the same for all the different types in principle. We purchased "as rolled" steel of the finest quality and processed it here at the works, drawing it and annealing it and cleaning it until it was reduced to the precise diameter required. The coils of wire were then passed through further machines which cut the wire up into straight lengths, approximately 15 inches long.

These straight wires were then passed through special machines which incidentally were designed and manufactured here at the works, and a point was ground on each wire, very great care being taken to ensure that the shape of the point, that is to say, the profile was absolutely correct.

The wires then passed to other special machines, again designed and manufactured here at the works, and the pointed pin was cut off the wire to the correct length. The wires could be returned to the grinding machines to have further points ground on and the pins which had been cut off were then heat-treated to give them the necessary hardness, and after that they were polished and polished until they shone and glistened like silver.

"VISION TONE"

The concept of the currently popular music centres and Video tape recorders is by no means a new one, as an article in a magazine from August, 1929 describing a new equipment named "Vision Tone" shows. Remember that sound-on-film had only just been developed for the cinema, let alone domestic, use, and that television was still in the experimental stage. Indeed the radio-gram was still a high-priced novelty at the time.

"H O M E T A L K I E S"

Wonderful new invention that will bring them direct to all. Gramophone records (electrically reproduced Radio Programmes Kinema Pictures Kinema Pictures accompanied by gramophone records or radio programmes, & "talkies".

All the above anyone will shortly be able to have in his own home, from one machine no larger than a cabinet gramophone for the comparatively modest sum of 75 guineas. (About the same size as a large HMV re-entrant.)

The device which does all this is the Vision Tone. It has already been demonstrated in London. It consists of a cabinet, contained in which are a radio set, an electric reproducing gramophone and a cinematograph projector. It will of course play all makes of records.

Very great care was always given to the points of these pins; if, for example, an extreme point was too large, it would not fit into the groove of a gramophone record. If, on the other hand, a point was too small, it would not properly fill the groove and true reproduction could not, therefore, be attained.

The pins, after they had been polished, were packed into little tin boxes, 200 pins to a box, and were as you say, sold retail at 9d (old pence) a tin. We had to buy in the tin boxes, black paper that went inside them and the gummed strip that went outside them and the carton into which the tin boxes were put, and then we had to deliver them to HMV or Columbia to whom we sold the pins at a few pence per thousand packed.

We made literally millions of gramophone pins and, in fact, after World War I, we built an extension to the works just to make them, and for years this worked for 24 hours per day. I well remember that HMV used to order 250 million at a time.

All needles were designed to play one 78 rpm record and then thrown away. During the playing of this record about $\frac{2}{1000}$ inch were worn away.

After some years we produced a special needle made from special chromium steel and these were in fact gold-plated and were called 'Duragold', and could play ten records. This was considered to be a great advance. Eventually the sapphire needle and modern stylus were introduced, so the demand for the old-fashioned steel needle declined. We have not made any since about 1950."

Hoping that our remarks will interest your readers,

Sincerely,

Ronnie Mountford.

PAUL COLLENETTE

In addition to showing any silent film the Vision Tone, owing to the fact that it is made to synchronise records and films, will supply you with the craze of the moment - talkies. For these it will be necessary to use records and films synchronised with each other at the time of manufacture.

An extensive repertoire of films, both silent and talkie, will be available currently with the placing of the machine on the market. This will be added to monthly and new subjects will be continually available. Films may be either purchased outright or hired through a form of lending library which is to be instituted immediately.

The Vision Tone takes 16mm films - the same size as are used by the Cine-Kodak. This fact adds considerably to its scope. In the first place the whole repertoire of Kodak Kinema films, which may be hired from Messrs. Kodak, is added to the large range of subjects which the Vision Tone firm itself will be offering.

Secondly, owners of Cine-Kodaks will be able to show, either silent or accompanied by gramophone records or radio, films which they themselves have taken. It is quite a simple and by no means expensive matter for any amateur to take his own moving pictures with a Cine-Kodak.

It is also possible for musicians and vocalists to borrow the kudos belonging to famous recording artistes. All

that is necessary is to play the desired record on the Vision Tone, sing or play the soloist's part with the record, be photographed at the same time with the Cine-Kodak, and when the resultant film and record are shown together, the original artiste will be heard but the substitute will be seen. The synchronisation of sound and vision will be perfect because when the film was taken the substitute was in time with the record.

Normally the film is projected horizontally from the cabinet on to a mirror and reflected back on a silver screen contained in the lid. In this way a picture of about 36 ins by 24 ins is obtained. If however a larger picture is required and extraneous screen may be employed, placed at a distance from the cabinet, and the film projected on to it either via the mirror or direct.

The reproduction of records and radio is equal that of any first class gramophone or radio set. The control of the apparatus is but little more complicated than an ordinary radio set. It is entirely electrically operated from battery or the domestic supply mains as desired.

The Vision Tone is an American invention. The first supply will be of American manufacture, but a company has already been formed in this country. It will shortly be on view at branches of Keith Prowse & Co. who will be distributing wholesale and retail. It will also be obtainable from music dealers, large stores, etc. Like most instruments of this type and price, the Vision Tone will be purchaseable by instalments."

The machine was about three feet wide, two feet deep and 4½ feet high, in a fancy carved wooden cabinet, standing on legs. The lid had a screen on its under side, and on opening, the mirror for projecting, and controls, sprung into place. There were double doors at the front, behind which the film was loaded vertically.

I have found no further reference to the Vision Tone, so cannot state whether the machine actually reached the market. Does any reader know something about it? It may be that it was killed by the imminent depression, as were others in the gramophone business. In any case, this apparatus was ahead of its time and the market probably would not have been ready for it, but it is an interesting "might-have-been"

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS

As some of us were leaving the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, after the Symposium on 2nd. July, 1977, Bob Walters called out "Let's have a photograph". The result of this impromptu pose is seen on page 1294.

From left to right we see Joe Pengelly, Paul Collenette, Christopher Proudfoot, Wyndham Hodgson, Peter Adamson, Raymond Wile (of New York), John Hoffman (of Bremerton, Washington state) and Ernie Bayly.

After the picture-taking, a majority of those in it, plus John Hoffman's father and son, "invaded" Henderson's vegetarian restaurant on Hanover Street where a most appetising variety of dishes proved very popular.

This is a case of "better late than never" and will give readers an idea of the appearance of some collectors who have contributed to our pages. We are grateful that it was taken to recall a very pleasurable occasion. May we hope that some of the other pictures taken during 1977 Centennial functions may at least pass before our Editorial eyes.

* * * * *

Our front cover picture was sent by Oliver Berliner and shows his grandfather's shop in Montreal circa 1900.

* * * * *

F O R T H C O M I N G S A L E S

Christie's South Kensington 8th. Nov. 1978
contact Christopher Proudfoot.
85. Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3JS
phone 01-581-2231

*

Phillips Marylebone Auction Rooms
26th. Sept. and 5th. Dec. 1978
contact Peter Marsh
Hayes Place, London NW1
phone 01-723-1118

*

Sotheby's Belgravia 16/17th. Nov. 1978
contact Hilary Kay
19. Motcomb Street, London SW1 X 8LB
phone 01-235-4311

Page 1293. . .

The top picture is of a small coin operated phonograph sold by Sotheby's Belgravia in 1976. It is included to be compared with the lower picture and those on page 1292 which is another similar phonograph sold by the same firm on 7th. July, 1978. It realised the price of £360. The catalogue description was "A good two-minute coin-operated phonograph, activated one old penny and having gold-lined black-painted bedplate, exposed feedscrew, floating reproducer and adjustable start and stop positions, the whole contained in a wooden cabinet, 10 x 9 x 8½ inches (25.5 x 23 x 21.5 cm). A glazed lid, sliding aperture for modern spun aluminium horn. Coin drawer at the side."

There is one of similar principal and design in the Pathé 1902 catalogue, but that sold at Sotheby's is not it. Our pictures show the phonograph from different angles. We are grateful to Miss Hilary Kay of Sotheby's Belgravia for the photography. had hoped to go along to see the machine and describe its act

* * * * *

Our other illustrations are of Edison Artistes, or items that are described in relevant text. We confess an omission . . . we had processed for inclusion pictures of one of the packets in which a Caruso 'recreation' HMV record was sold, but madly we have mislaid the negatives. We have put them in a wrong envelope and misfiled them somewhere! Thus more Edison artistes

* * * * *

EUROCHEQUES

Contrary to belief, we lose too much when when paying Eurocheques into the banking account. In future we will positively N O T accept them, and will return them to the sender.

We have found that only those from Andorra and Finland are worthy of consideration.

THE COUNTER TENOR

Judging by a book which I read recently, the story of "The rise and fall of the Counter Tenor" will soon be as much a part of school-style history as is the Industrial Revolution! Perhaps I should, for the sake of the majority of readers, briefly state the storyline.

In the Restoration period when English music flourished as never before (or since) the Counter Tenor voice was tremendously popular both in solo and concerted music. With the coming of Italian opera to England there was a swift movement of favour away from homegrown voices, and the Counter was banished to the choir stalls and glee clubs wherein he was to languish for two centuries, until the advent of Alfred Deller just after World War II.

My own interest in the voice is a practical one and thus, on hearing reminiscences of church singers, I decided to look for any old records made while the voice was out of favour with serious musicians. I have found a surprising number and, what is more to the point, their standard of vocalisation was evidently far higher than that of many artistes, past and present. I give below some titles which will delight anyone who cares for a good song well sung, together with a few artistes whose records are worth seeking.

Probably the most recorded of the singers considered here was WILL OAKLAND whose voice was of exceptional range and very constant anywhere within it. Collectors of cylinders will no doubt have some by Oakland, but several of his best songs are to be found on Columbia-Rena discs and Regal. Two that are really worth hearing are "With all her faults, I Love her still" on Regal G7375 and "Just one word of Consolation" on G7369.

P. JOHNS

1317

Also on Regal, singing "Mother Machree" and "When the Robins nest again" (G7372) we have CHARLES HAWKINS. This record is an example of very full plummy tone, having more of a baritone taste in the lower register. If anyone can give information about this artiste I would be most grateful.

A voice very similar to today's breed of Alto is that of HERBERT AINSWORTH who can be heard singing "Sleep my love, Sleep" on Ariel 780.

Most commonly found in piles of old discs are the Zonophone releases of HARTHERLY CLARKE. He made many records and certainly his was one of the loveliest voices imaginable, being full, powerful and under complete control, as can be heard on 1747 "Our hands have met, but not our hearts" and 1657 "Won't you buy my pretty flowers?"

I have no wish to enter into the old controversy over the difference between those singers calling themselves alto, and those preferring the term Counter Tenor; however I must mention two singers going under the latter title, who, on the strength of records I have heard, were merely high tenors. They are Frank Coombs and James Llewelyn, on Regal and Scala respectively. Nor do I include natural sopranos such as FRANK COLMAN (on Decca) in the context of this article.

Thus I come to the only singer who was styled Alto on the record label: BEN MILLETT who made six acoustic discs for H M V in 1917 - 19. These pieces are all of Church music, and contain some ravishing choral parts while the solo voice is heard against an organ accompaniment to very great effect.

I have no doubt that on some obscure label there may be other alto voices waiting discovery. I shall be pleased to hear of them and shall be pleased if anyone possessing such a record will write to tell me about it.

BING CROSBY - EARLY GOLD

The titles - see p.1319

Learn to Croon ★ Moonstruck ★ Down the Old Ox Road ★ Thanks

BING'S GREATEST?
The Day You Came Along

I Guess It Had to Be That Way ★ Black Moonlight ★ Just an Echo in the Valley ★ Beautiful Girl ★ After Sundown ★ We'll Make Hay While the Sun Shines ★ Our Big Love Scene ★ Temptation ★ Love Thy Neighbor ★ Once in a Blue Moon ★ Good-Night, Lovely Little Lady ★ May I? ★ She Reminds Me of You ★ I'm Hummin'—I'm Whistlin'—I'm Singin' ★ Love in Bloom ★ Straight from the Shoulder

SPECIAL: The score from Paul Whiteman's trailblazing 1930 film musical, The King of Jazz
Happy Feet ★ A Bench in the Park ★ It Happened in Monterey ★ I Like to Do Things for You ★ Ragamuffin Romeo So the Bluebirds and the Blackbirds Got Together ★ Song of the Dawn

Dinah ★ Please ★ Here Lies Love ★ Wa-Da-Da ★ Mississippi Mud ★ Tain't So, Honey, Tain't So ★ My Suppressed Desire ★ Makin' Whoopee ★ I'll Get By ★ Susianna ★ If I Had You ★ Let's Do It ★ The Spell of the Blues ★ My Kinda Love ★ Till We Meet ★ Louise

★ I Kiss Your Hand, Madame ★ Baby, Oh Where Can You Be? ★ Without a Song ★ Can't We Be Friends? ★ Gay Love ★ If I Had a Talking Picture of You ★ After You've Gone ★ Sweet Sue ★ You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me ★ Livin' in the Sunlight, Lovin' in the Moonlight ★ How Long Will It Last? ★ St. Louis Blues (take A) ★ St. Louis Blues (take B) ★ My Woman ★ Paradise ★ Lord, You Made the Night Too Long ★ Sweet Georgia Brown ★ Cabin in the Cotton

MY RECORD REPRODUCING EQUIPMENT

E. Bayly

See page 1294 for illustrations.

78 rpm records had differing frequency characteristics from today's records, and it is now virtually a whole generation since they were in production, so it is understandable that present amplifiers do not cater for them. (We assume that collectors, realising that 78 rpm records are part of social history and refrain from grinding them down on acoustic gramophones!)

The amplification of ones records on playback involves a few links in a chain. The first, requires a stylus of the correct diameter, otherwise the sound issuing from the speaker will include unwanted noise caused by the wrong diameter.

Fortunately one may now have styli of various sizes to fit one's lightweight pickup made by such firms as Expert Pickups, (whose Managing Director, Wyndham Hodgson, is seen among the group outside the Royal Scottish Museum on page 1294). I feel that it is inadvisable to put, say, a condenser across the pickup leads to reduce hiss before the signal reaches the amplifier. One should accept all of the signal from the transducer and use something in the following stages of the amplifier.

My pickup arm is a Lustre (a discount house version of an SME) fitted with a Shure M3D cartridge into which varying diameters of styli may be fitted. Philatelists' tweezers are

useful for the purpose. The slightly later Shure M 44 E is equally good and is preferable if one wishes to change styli for the stylus mounting can be changed with the fingers.

Initially, I used only the Eagle A A 6 amplifier which has five sliders built round five main frequencies 40 Hz, 200 Hz, 1200 Hz, 6KHz, 15 KHz. As members of the Birmingham Phonograph Society will testify, it enabled me to produce some excellent transfers from two-minute wax cylinders and 78 rpm discs. But, the complete amplifier A A 6 is no longer available, which is a pity because it was a convenient instrument for we addicts of "Low - fi". Following the withdrawal of the AA6 amplifier, the frequency equalisation section was made separately as FF1 and could be used between one's pickup and amplifier. In fact it can still be obtained while stocks last, from Eagle International. (In England the address is Precision Centre, Heather Park Drive, Wembley HA0 1SU; which is found just off the North Circular Road, London, or only five minutes walk from Stonebridge Park station.) The F F 11 has now been superseded by a Stereo Graphic Equaliser GH 520 which I have not had an opportunity to try.

I have now moved on to incorporate the use of a "Sound Shaper Two" made by A D C which is available in British Isles from B S R Ltd., Powke Lane, Cradley Heath, West Midlands B64 5QH. Or, in U S A from BSR Company, Picket District Road, New Milford, Connecticut 06776. Like the Eagle range it is Japanese-made and one assumes that it has worldwide distribution.

It has sliders built around the frequencies 30 Hz, 50Hz, 90Hz, 160Hz, 300Hz, 500Hz, 900Hz, 1600Hz, 3KHz, 5KHz, 9KHz, 16KHz. (There is the smaller version the S. S. 1. with five sliders built around 60Hz, 240Hz, 1KHz, 3.5 KHz, 10KHz) As each was designed for stereo use, the left and right channels are separate and operated separately. When the mono signal is fed in one has twice the control possibilities.

Let's forget stereo. It is well known that each instrument and the human voice has its frequency ranges and harmonics in certain areas or octaves. By moving the appropriate sliders one may, for instance, "lift" the voice a bit from its accompaniment. Some early electrical 78's are rather "boomy" in the middle bass, as I term it, and by "reducing" the frequencies around 160 - 200 Hz this is corrected. As one may expect the hiss/scratch can be greatly reduced. The amount of hiss that can be removed depends on several factors. Generally speaking, the newer the record, the less the problem. But "hiss and scratch" is not always in the highest frequency ranges. In the later 1920's it seems to me that H M V records had inferior surfaces to the Columbia laminated discs. (B U T that reminds me. . . It seems that H M V must also have experimented with laminated records, for readers report having found them, among the B series. The surfaces both look and sound smoother than their "normal" contemporaries. Please write in reporting to your Editor any you may have.)

With records which are worn, or have poor surfaces anyway, one cannot eliminate all of the hiss, but one can remove much and make it more pleasant. It may be necessary to adjust the sliders for every disc or cylinder you play. But, either you wish to hear it at its best, or you do not. After a while when one becomes accustomed to the instrument it takes negligible time to adjust.

So by using the suitable stylus and some kind of proper frequency control one can hear the music upon the record well. Mere "treble and bass" tone knobs are useless.

I am sorry if I offend, but I feel that no acoustic gramophone/phonograph plays what is on the record. I feel that all cylinders and "78 rpm" records had far more in their grooves than a soundbox or reproducer ever played out of them. I wonder, too, if every collector actually has his soundbox/reproducer properly tuned, but is listening to a mere shadow of its potential.

Steel needles cannot suit every record because the size of the groove has not remained constant since the introduction of discs. This is no doubt the reason why each record-maker over the years has recommended his own brand of needles, for one assumes that they would have been pointed to fit the groove then on the record. Berliner discs vary from very fine grooved to coarse. When you consider one letter from Eldridge Johnson in U S A to Fred Gaisberg in London which said simply that the profile of the cutting-stylus should resemble the profile of the narrow end of a hen's egg and that recording engineers ground their own styli it is not surprising that the groove was far from uniform. Generally speaking, the size of the groove over the period from the "G & T days" to the last 78's became narrower. So I suppose when playing records acoustically now one should use "Extra loud" for the oldest discs varying to "extra soft" for those post World War II. Nowadays steel needles seem only to be made in "loud tone".

WATCH OUT! At the end of the 78 days, some companies made their 78 rpm discs of vinylite and I have seen some whose owners were unaware of this and the records resemble ploughfields. If one has new, or almost new, vinyl 78's and plays them on modern equipment they are as silent as a long play record. To mention a few of these vinyl 78's . . . From England, Nixa, Charles Brill, Bosworth, Chappell, Isis. From USA, MacGregor, Exner, Windsor, Sets-in-Order. From Australia, Memphis. This list may not be exhaustive.

If I can stray on to tape recorders . . . Their weak link is the loudspeaker on playback. The tape can record on to its surface more than the internal speaker can reproduce. One should always use a decent external speaker, or like myself, play tapes through the whole amplification assembly using the correct input. In this way a tape will sound as good as recorded disc. My speakers are the appropriate units for the Eagle amplifier, but as I almost always listen to mono records, I have put cardboard masks over the "tweeters", though shall no doubt one day cut the wire to stop them altogether!

BOOKS REVIEW

E. Bayly

"JAZZ RECORDS 1897 - 1942" by Brian Rust

Arlington House has published a fourth edition of Brian Rust's two-volume book "Jazz Records 1897 - 1942". This discography includes what I should term fringes interests such as banjo trios, the Boswell Sisters (and Connie alone), British Harry Roy, some of Sousa's Band, Sophie Tucker, the criterion being if the group was performing ragtime tunes, jazz, or a "hot" dance number, even if that is not what it is normally noted for.

There is a mine of information packed within the 1996 pages. There are over 30,000 recordings listed. An artist/performer index has some 10,00 entries. Securing the assistance of his son Victor and friends John & Pauline Wadley, Brian Rust has added a song index for this edition, listing some 16,000 titles. Reference to the advertisement tells us that this shows 135 versions of "St. Louis Blues", 49 versions of "I got rhythm" and one of "If you sheik your mama, mama's gonna Sheba on you" !! There is an index of 239 record label abbreviations. There is a cross-reference for pseudonymous groups. Personnels recording dates, etc, etc.

This is highly recommended for jazz record collectors in particular, and generally for those interested in 78 rpm discs.

Price from Arlington House is \$60, or if you join and buy it through the Nostalgia Book Club it is \$28.89 and counts as two for membership requirements. Address 165, Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, New York 10801.

"Who's Who in Hollywood 1900 - 1976" by David Ragan

Some 20,00 entries of every actor and actress who has appeared in a film shown in U S A, over the last $\frac{3}{4}$ century.

Divided into those living and past it has 864 pages packed with information about the great super stars and the "bit" parts actors/actresses whose presence is equally essential. Some have only a single line entry which would however be a key to further study. Others have much more, not necessarily being current big stars.

Of course, numerous of the film stars made recordings which we can still enjoy. Thinking on the lines of Edison I looked up Anna Chandler & Marie Dressler. Others not normally associated with film whom one finds on records are Bert Williams, George M. Cohan. A legend who is heard but briefly on a Mapleson cylinder is Fritz Scheff & who made a film in 1915 if one could find it. Non-American artistes are also included.

Those are just a few obscure references to show how deep the coverage. I for one will find it an extremely useful reference tool. It is a credit to its author and we are grateful that such researchers exist.

Price from Arlington House is \$25. Also available from Nostalgia Book Club.

"Les Pionniers du disque folklorique québécois 1920-50" by Gabriel Labbé

With 216 pages Monsieur Labbé covers entirely new ground and the publishers L'Aurore are to be congratulated for sponsoring it. It is highly specialised in intention, but fills a gap in our knowledge of record artistes, giving a short biography of each artiste whose records are listed together with, in most cases, a photograph.

The book opens with a more general survey of folk music records including pictures of Michael Coleman, Scott Skinner, John Kimmel and two fine exponents of Québec folk music Carignan & Bruneau. Descriptive notes which appeared in some Victor supplements are quoted. The best melodies of the discographies are discussed, and to give a portrait of Old Québec their is a quotation from Louis Fréchette's "Contes Canadiens".

Extremely well produced with soft cover, this will appeal to all sorts of collector despite its specialised field.

Price Can\$ 9.95 from Gabriel Labbé, c.p.61, Succ Jean Talon, Montréal, P. Québec, H1S 2Z1, Canada.

EDISON CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS

A detailed account of the entertainment models until 1929.

By George L. Frow and Albert F. Seftl

Here is the book for which everyone has been waiting. It is truly excellent & is as definitive as can be without obscure facts coming to light with the passage of time. Not only are the more usual models described through their various modifications, but also uncommon models such as generations of coin slots. While not wishing cast a reflection on the book, we feel that it should include the models made especially for Edison Bell in Britain during the early 1890's. There are photographs of all the others, plus reproducers, recorders and accessories, on heavy glossy art-paper. So much detail is given about the Phonographs that it is virtually encyclopedic. If you are interested in "machines" you just have to buy this book. It is THE book on Edison Phonographs. Frank Andrews has added a brief but vital link by listing the various "Edison Companies". In U S A the book is available from A. Seftl, P O Box 838, Daly City, Calif 94017. It is also available in £ sterling currency of £ 7 plus 50 pence postage from us at 19, Glendale Road, Bournemouth BH6 4JA, England.

Uncle Josh

The Phonograph during the 1880's and 90's was often exhibited as a "nickel in the slot" machine and played either the Bell and Tainter cylinders of Edison "brown wax" type cylinders, to which one listened through a set of ear tubes. It might be mentioned that reproduction of these cylinders through the tubes was not too bad, however the same cylinder played through a horn would sound terribly thin and weak.

Transcription from Edison cylinder 3886 (c.1898). Uncle Josh Weathersby's troubles in a hotel. Original Yankee story by Mr. Cal Stewart.

(laughing) Well, here I am again, and in trouble as usual, just looks to me like I can't turn around any more without getting into trouble of some kind or another. (laughing) Landlord put me out of the hotel this morning because I left the gas burning a;; night, and that darn old fool had a sign up not to blow it out. (laughing) Well I set up about an hour and a half trying to blow out one of those 'lectric lights, and I would have done it, but I couldn't get the chimney off it, somehow or another. (laughing) I had to go out to a restaurant to get something to eat for dinner, and I went into one of 'em and sat down. I ordered a bowl of oyster soup, and they brought me out a bowl of oyster soup - had one little oyster down in the bottom of it and, the hungry rascal was eating up the crackers as fast as I could put them in.

COLISEUM PSEUDONYMS

The following pseudonyms were used among the first 222 10-inch diameter C O L I S E U M Records, which were derived from English Beka matrices and German Beka matrices and possibly Austrian Scala Records matrices. A number of the known Beka artistes were already pseudonyms.

Coliseum "artiste" name (a pseudonym)	Name as issued on Beka. ? indicates that name is unknown as an established artiste.
Some pseudonyms covered more than one artiste.	
* * *	
A. F. Adams and Company	Charles Penrose and Company
Chas. C. Adams (baritone/bass)	Thomas Howell
C. Arditti (accordion)	Pietor Frosini
Arnold M. Asher (tenor)	Bernard Turner
Walter T. Bedford (baritone)	Jack Sherwood (?is this Kirkby)
Blue Diamonds Military Band	Empire Military Band(House Band)
J. Bourne	A. Taylor.? (on Zonophone this is Charles Draper.)
Arthur T. Braddon (vocalist)	A) William Ashifield ?
" (baritone)	B) Robert Ingram ?
Billy B. Brookes (comic)	Harry Happy (Chas Penrose's name on Dacapo)
Chris Bryan (comic)	A) Harry Bluff
" "	B) Will Johnson ?
" "	C) Burt Weston
Agnes M. Bryder (contralto)	Jessie Broughton
Arnold M. Burke (tenor)	Bernard Turner
Frank Curtis (comic)	A) Arthur Franklin (= S.Kirkby)
" "	B) Stanley Kirkby
" "	C) Fred Maxwell ?
" "	D) Arthur Osmond (= A.Gilbert)
Robert F. Dundas	Alexander Johnson ?
Arthur Forrest (banjoist)	John Pidoux
E.Glov (comic)	Fred Maxwell ?
E. F. Glover (comic)	A) Jack Charman
" "	B) Albert George ?
" (baritone)	C) Jack Sherwood ?
A. T. Greene (baritone)	James Hudson ?
A. T. Greiner (baritone)	James Hudson ?

B. L. STINCHCOMB 1319

(laughing) Well, I just picked up the piece of crackers and dumped them in on top of him. I guess he's got them ate up by this time. (laughing)

Well, down at that hotel where I was stoppin' they had - kind of a little round machine sitting down by the office. I think they called it a funny-graph, near as I can remember. Well I got to looking at it and noticed on it where it said drop a nickel in the place where you put the nickels and put the tubes in your ears and you'll hear a fella sing a song, make a speech or do something of that kind. Well, I wanted to hear what it had to say so dropped a nickel in, put them tubes in my ears, and just then there was a band commenced a-playing around there there someplace and I went out to see where the band was. I don't know what became of it, I couldn't find it any place and when I come back in the machine was stopped and I didn't get to hear what it had to say. (laughing). Well, I noticed a little room at the hotel, about eight feet square, didn't look as if it had been occupied very much, only had one little sofa in it, but it looked pretty nice and comfortable and I went in and sat down. Well they had the strongest fella in that room I calculate I ever seen in my life, just the minute I sat down on the sofa, he got hold of a rope in one hand and pulled me, room and all, right up stairs. (laughing) I tell you, he was the strongest fella I ever seen. (laughing)

F. ANDREWS

Miss A. F. Harding(serio comic)	A) Florrie (Flora) Cromer
" (soprano)	B) Violet Essex
" (serio comic)	C) Miss Georgie Goldin
" (serio comic)	D) Rosie Hayes
Cyril Hastings (baritone)	A) James Hudson ?
" (tenor)	B) Philip Ritte
Philip G. Horton (baritone)	Archie Anderson
Jolly James (comic)	Burt Weston
Walter Lawrence (baritone)	Harry Trevor
Arthur Lovell (comic)	A) Jack Charman
" (baritone/comic)	B) Stanley Kirkby
" (comic)	C) Fred Maxwell ?
" (comic)	D) Tom Temple ?
Archie B. Maclean (comic)	A) Harry Cove
" "	B) Fred Maxwell ?
Fred Marsden (comic)	Jack Charman
Fred Mason (comic)	Arthur Osmond (=Arthur Gilbert)
Walter Melrose (bass/baritone)	Norman Williams
Leslie Milton (baritone)	A) Arthur Franklin (=S. Kirkby)
" "	B) Stanley Kirkby
" "	C) Fred Maxwell ?
" "	D) Jack Sherwood ?
Arthur Page (comic)	Jack Charman
Arthur C. Price (banjoist)	Olly Oakley
Road and Street (ragtime duo)	Cook and Carpenter ?
Tom Rose (comic)	Jack Charman
Royal Military Band	A)Beka London Orch/Julian Jones
"	B) Beka Orchestra,Berlin
"	C) Empire Military Band (House band)
"	D) H. M. 1st. Life Guards/ G. Miller
"	E) H. M. Royal Artillery Band/ E. C. Stratton
Royal Orchestral Band	Palais de Danse Orch,Berlin/ Georgi Vintiliscu

***Anyone able to confirm the ? queried artistes as genuine performers, or identify them as other artistes, please write to Frank Andrews, 46. Aboyne Road, London NW 10 OHA.

Some while ago we received some lp records of modern jazz which is really outside the scope of this magazine. Being very well recorded, the make "Dunya World" being new to us, and being performed by European musicians, we sent the records off to one of our readers in the Soviet Union as we know this to be in his field of interest. Mr. Tkachenko has now sent us his comments.

"REACTION" by the Mario Rusca Trio. Dynia World LP 006

(Rusca piano; Stefano Cerri, electric bass; Gianni Cazzola, percussion)

The first composition "Reaction" finds Mr. Rusca using latin american rhythm, with syncopated play and pleasant harmony. I can feel the influences by McCoy Tyner and H. Hancock. "I should Care" has a romantic introduction and the theme in false tempo. It is a light association with Dave Brubeck's playing. In "Waltz for Debbie" Rusca plays a clear theme with an elementary blues harmony. "First Trip" includes very fine technique and improvisation, but it is difficult to pick out Rusca's own self, for the playing borrows from the influences of Bill Evans, Bobby Timmons and Keith Jarrett. "Speak Love" . . . This piece is played with a good swing in fast tempo. Pianist Rusca is most inventive and sounds like Oscar Peterson. "Straight no Chaser" is a lucky using of sequences by pianist who again has something in common with Oscar Peterson, while "Blue & Green" is a blues played in classic manner.

"RECHERCHE" by the Enrico Dynia Quartet. Dynia World PSG 004

(Giancarlo Barigozzi, tenor & soprano saxophone & flute; Oscar Rocchi, piano, piano fender & sintetizzatore; Carlo Milano, bass; Giancarlo Pillot, percussion)

"Blues for Julie" is a very pleasant feature and mood by flute, while the pianist improvises in the manner of Tyner and Hancock. Then comes the part for tenor sax in a good tradition of A. Shepp. The flautist is not so famous as the pianist but has more original thoughts and original talent than the pianist who relies on derivations from American players. In "Blues in Fa Minore" G. Barigozzi develops the theme on soprano sax like R. Kirk or A. Ayler. Next soloist, Oscar Rocchi demonstrates his virtuosity in arranged improvisation under the influence of P. Bley and T. Montolio. Barigozzi's next solo on soprano sax is in the manner of E. Dolphy. The piano solo version of "Blues in Fa Minore" by O. Rocchi is played in 4/4 and 3/4 and his variations are influenced by D. Brubeck and O. Peterson. Giancarlo Pillot, the percussionist has a fine co-ordination of legs and hands which we hear especially in "Blues for Julie". This type of co-ordination seems rare among European musicians. He sometimes shows the influence of Benny Harris, but has his own original interpretations and accentuation. His left hand is very sharp and he has a fast reaction and supports and feels his leader Oscar Rocchi very well.

RECORD REVIEWS

E.B.

THE BRIGHOUSE & RASTRICK BAND

Having mostly heard "The Floral Dance" by means of Peter Dawson's record and read of the squabbling over copyrights recently, it is very refreshing to hear this "modern" version by the famous Brighouse & Rastrick Band. We note that its composition is credited to Katie Moss! It's jolly rhythm is followed by a quietly dignified "Ceremony of the Red Bishops" from the ballet 'Checkmate' and side two concludes with the imposing 'Finale' from the same ballet by Sir Arthur Bliss. "The Girl with the Flaxen Hair" is a showcase for two cornets either in duet or echo played with beautifully restrained control. "Delicado" introduces a joyful latin-american rhythm. George Gershwin would enjoy the playing of his "Summertime". R. Zahle's "Wellington March" receives a full-blooded brassy treatment. The programme is contrasted with Robert Farnon's delightful "Une vie de Matelot" and Holst's "Mars" from the 'Planet's Suite'.

Assuming that all of the great bands of the past who recorded for cylinders or early discs sounded as well as the Brighouse and Rastrick Band one can realise how they brought great music to people, especially in the smaller towns, and it is certain that this well-recorded disc under review will continue that influence.

Pickwick SHM 961

BERT WEEDON NAT KING COLE

Bert Weedon is one of our greatest exponents of the plectrum. Here he plays an electric guitar with piano (sometimes electronic organ) and drums accompaniment. While one never doubts his skill on this record, one feels that something is restraining him! Was it the person in charge of the recording session? Or am I a greedy sort of fellow? Each tune is played "straight", the guitar playing the rôle of a solo voice, its tribute to Nat King Cole, I presume. I would have preferred each song to have included "with variations" (as old record catalogues used to say) when the virtuoso was allowed a little rein for inventiveness. This record is a credit to Bert Weedon and just memorial to Nat Cole but could have been a whole lot more. Among the twelve songs recalled are "Ramblin' Rose", "Mona Lisa", "Answer me my love", "Unforgettable", "I'm in the mood for love", "Smile". Ideal for those who like relaxed versions of old songs.

Pickwick Contour CN 2031

(previously on Contour 2870495)

This record starts off in fine style with one of Peter Dawson's finest records "I Am a Roamer" on Edison Blue Amberol 23164. It has been excellently transferred. The other 15 items are from various eras of The Gramophone Co. (being issued on Zonophone, Gramophone or H M V). I am lucky in that this reissues brings us several other songs from Dawson which are favourites of mine.

Among them are "The Wolf" by Shield (from early Zonophone, a pity, the Edison cylinder is better - not that this is rubbish!). I wish someone would tell me what this song comes from. The notes go so far as hint that it comes from a stage production, but that is all. I suppose I must utilise my British Library readers ticket to find out! Another is "The Old Flagged Path" by Arundale from 'The Little White House' cycle! A reflective song which makes me intend to investigate the rest of the cycle some day.

Although we swish backwards and forwards in time, all of the recordings are acoustic so it is less noticeable to anyone not knowing the time span from first to last.

Eric Coates is recalled as a song writer in "The Green Hills of Somerset" as is Landon Ronald in "The Lament of Shah Jehan". Typical Dawson fare are "The Moon Hath Raised her Lamp above" (duet with Sidney Coltham) and "The Arrow and the Song". Among the unexpected are "Sally" and "Whip-poor-Will" (duet with Bessie Jones), both from Jerome Kern's "Sally" and the final Trio from Gounod's Faust with Alice Esty and John Harrison (from G & T). Although the sleeve note tells us that "The Spirit of the Wood" (duet with Eleanor Jones-Hudson) is from Parker's "Fairylane" first produced in 1915, it is copied from a single-sided Zonophone which would have been recorded several years before that date.

Overall, a very interesting selection of acoustical Peter Dawson records, some very uncommonly found. The transfers sound good on my "gear" with scratch not too high, but I wonder how they would sound on equipment having only 'bass' and 'treble' controls. However, a must for those who like Peter Dawson.

Pearl GEM 144

BING CROSBY - EARLY GOLD

While Neil McCaffrey's intentions were obviously excellent, some crooks have got in without his knowledge. In fact it may have been only one named Leroy Carr who "produced" the first two lps of the 4-lp set. It is probably he who has turned these first two into stereo by strangling the bass frequencies on the left channel while exaggerating the treble. The right channel is the reverse. Overall an echo reminiscent of a gigantic empty army drilling

hall has been thrown in, so you can imagine the effect, say, when Bix Beiderbecke plays a solo. If the engineer making the transfer thought that mono records are the equivalent of the sow's ear of proverbs, no manner of stereo-fiddling will produce the silk purse.

Then we come to records three and four "produced" by Miles Kreuger. Obviously a man with ears, for these two are beautifully transferred, in the manner that mature collectors now expect..... the original sound, but minus the scratch & plops. The engineer was George Engfer.

On page 1317 we print a list of the titles included. Some of the original 78's are rare in British Isles and in USA, but not necessarily the same titles, because their catalogue life varied! Owing to the way in which some of the original masters changed hands, some were never issued in Britain, and others only for a brief spell.

Thus it is an absolute shame that the records are not all of the same quality. Then, perhaps everyone does not hate echo like I do. Bear in mind that you have 32 songs well-transferred, all 64 are no later than May, 1934, the four records come in a box with excellent notes & recording details, the set costs only \$12.95, it's a good package of early Bing.

Nostalgia Book Club, 165 Huguenot Street, New Rochelle, New York 10801.

The Music of NACIO HERB BROWN

As Brian Rust says in his notes, ask a hundred people who Nacio Herb Brown was and the answer would be negative. Your editor claims to have known the name as a composer, but could not think of a tune title. Look at the list of tunes comprising this collection played by the Great British Dance Bands and I'm sure you'll recognise some great songs immediately....

The Doll Dance : Moonlit Waters : Wedding of the Painted Doll : You were meant for me : Pagan Love Song : Singin' in the rain : Chant of the Jungle : After you kiss : Paradise : All I do is dream of you : Broadway Rhythm : You are my lucky star : Would You? : I'm feelin' Like a Million : Your Broadway and my Broadway : Good Morning. Thirteen of them have lyrics supplied by Arthur Freed.

They are played by the bands of the Savoy Orpheans, Debroy Somers, Jack Hylton, Arthur Roseberry, Ambrose, Henry Hall, Harry Roy, Carroll Gibbons, Nat Gonella, Jack Harris and Geraldo, over the period 1927 - 1940. In chronological order they trace Mr. Brown's career.

Among the vocalists we hear Les Allen, Sam Browne, Cyril R. Newton, Bert Yarlett, Nat Gonella, Harry Roy and Fred Latham.

Although I have listened to a goodly number of dance band re-issue records over the past year, I found myself enjoying this selection immensely. For me it is a high spot. As well as $2/4$, $4/4$, we have $6/8$ and $3/4$ rhythms giving pleasing variety. The arrangements by the various bands are first class to.

They were well-recorded originally so even if you rely only on "treble" & "bass" controls you will find that the clean transfers by Chris Ellis will come over sparkingly. A highly recommended record.

World Records SH 267

THIS IS HENRY HALL (1932 - 1939)

A two-lp set re-issuing the recordings of Henry Hall's dance orchestras from Columbia. The excellent sleeve-notes by Brian Rust recall how Henry Hall came from the Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland with his Band to become the B B C Dance Orchestra and that its first broadcast under that name was on 15th. March, 1932. I remember the occasion well, and it must have impressed me for I cut the pictures from the 'Radio Times' and still have them. While I never become sickly with nostalgia, it is pleasant to hear again Mr. Hall's recordings from that period of the early 1930's.

The 32 tunes chosen in this compilation give a very fine cross-section of his work. Among his own compositions are "East Wind" a descriptive piece of light music in foxtrot rhythm, the gay "Many Happy Returns of the Day" and "Just little bits and pieces". Also in light music style is Zez Confrey's intricate "Buffoon".

The bands could also play in a very relaxed slow foxtrot rhythm that rolls along easily in tunes like "The Three of Us", with vocal by Phyllis Robins, who is joined by Len Burman and Les Allen in "Making Conversation" with excellent muted trumpet by Arthur Williams, while, cleverly, various snippets of conversations are introduced when "they ought to have been making love". There is also some very pleasant muted brass section in Henry Hall's own well-known waltz, "It's time to say goodnight".

Capable of playing in sections, there is a wonderful version of "Under the Double Eagle", which, recorded in 1937, would make many "big bands" look to their laurels.

Like many another, Henry Hall and his Band toured the theatres, from which we have two recordings - from the Alhambra, Bradford, and the Pavilion, Bournemouth, (the very same building in which your Editor is often seen!). The former brings us Bob Mallin singing "Silver on the Sage", while from the latter is a bright medley of "Miss Annabelle Lee/ Bye bye Blackbird/ Hi-diddle-diddle".

Our bands all seem to have played "novelty numbers", and Mr. Hall was no exception. Perhaps world events inspired "Olga Pullofski, the Beautiful Spy", and crooning "When the Guardsman started crooning on parade", we shudder to think what inspired the clever "The Broken Record" !!

If you like British dance bands this is an essential addition to your collection. Nicely transferred to lp by Chris Ellis & Pete Brown.

World Records SHB 48

The Radio Years, numbers-

6. Ray Noble & his Orchestra 1935/6 with Al Bowlly.
7. Glen Gray & his Casa Loma Orchestra.

These are not strictly 78 rpm originals although dating from 1935-36. They are radio transcriptions. But, are the equivalent of commercial recordings of the day, being what the bands were then currently playing.

Both records contain some excellent material. The Casa Loma Orchestra was already playing in a style which Benny Goodman later turned into the "swing era" not that every tune is "swing". "The Continental" has original treatment in a more relaxed rhythm than is usual, while "Smoke Rings" is of course slow. Other tunes like "Limehouse Blues" are of course quick.

Side one of the Ray Noble set are tunes arranged by Glenn Miller who had helped to find the musicians for Noble, who was allowed to take only his drummer Bill Harty and vocalist Al Bowlly with him. Miller assembled a group of musicians who were later to become stars of the big band world, such as Charlie Spivak, Will Bradley, Claude Thornhill and the charming man, Bud Freeman, now domiciled in Britain still playing tenor saxophone and who in the past 50 years must have played with just about everyone, but whose conscientious work has added something to whichever group with whom he plays. For the second date there is an almost completely different personnel. If your eyes are good and you can read small white printing on a black background, you'll read why. Ray Noble remained in U S A to make a career, while Al Bowlly, realising that however good a vocalist might be, at that stage in U S A, a vocalist was just a piece of the band with no great future, so he returned to London where he was able to develop his personality.

Bowlly sings on seven of the tunes included, such as "Easy to Love", "I Love you truly" and "Under your spell". Stupidly, the 1935 and 1936 recordings, by the two Noble bands are all mixed up together, necessitating continual reference to the sleeve notes. I feel that this is discourteous to performers and listeners too. Also discourteous is the poor transfer from the originals to LP. This must have been done by the U S A firm "Rumbleseat Records" from whom

the LP masters come. There is a false echo, and general imbalance of tone, and both the Casa Loma and Ray Noble suffer from it. The engineer responsible must be without ears. It is obvious that both were recorded originally in smallish studios, so on LP we now hear the sound of a band reverberating in a small box with a big echo all round. Done in the concourse of Grand Central Station, New York, no doubt.

So, it's up to you! Listen before parting with your money. The music is good, but the echo is not.

London HMG 5027 and London HMG 5028.

ALL OUR OWN WORK

We often wonder what sort of a person makes a composer. The nearest one normally comes is a photograph, or a distorted film life-story when he has departed it. This record gives you a chance to add the dimension of actual sound.

Nat D. Ayer's greatest successes had occurred by 1922, and his greatest interpreters had been Violet Lorraine, George Robey and Alfred Lester. Here he sings and plays the piano with Carroll Gibbons' Boyfriends such great tunes as "Oh you beautiful doll", "Another little drink", "Let the great big world keep turning" and "If you were the only girl in the world". He reveals himself to be a competent pianist. He was about 47 years old when he recorded this by which time his voice sounds like that of a friendly comedian rather than as a former member of the American Ragtime Octet.

John W. Green is an even better pianist, but does not sing; his selection including well-known tunes like "Coquette", "I'm Yours", "I Cover the waterfront", "Out of Nowhere", "Body and Soul". Mr. Green has had some fine fingers help his songs along. In "Repeal the blues" he indulges in some nice variations upon his own theme. Sammy Fain's two songs are rather indistinguished, like his singing, his piano-playing is better. Sam Coslow wrote some good songs (as we shall see elsewhere) though as a vocalist sounds like someone imitating a crooner!

Mabel Wayne began as a vaudeville singer, but when twenty gave it up to write songs like "In a little Spanish Town", "It happened in Monterey", "Little man you've had a busy day" and "Ramona", despite which she sounds like an average pianist and only average singer, but with expression. Arthur Schwartz plays well, and sings like an average cabaret act (but reflect . . . even though Noël Coward was a genius, do you think he could sing?). Schwartz had some good songs too such as "Love is a dancing thing", "Got a bran' new suit" and others mentioned elsewhere.

Irving Caesar and Ray Henderson play piano duets while Scott Wood sings with them. Caesar was the lyricist. Their selection is tunes from their show "Transatlantic Rhythm". Irving Berlin sings his own "This is the army Mr. Jones" and "My British Buddy." He too would not even have made it in the chorus at the 'Met' . . .

The majority of the recordings were made between 1933 and 1936 (Berlin's was 1943) so cannot be considered old. Most of them are from Columbia originals. Most of them are difficult to find around junkshops, which perhaps reflects public opinion on composers as performers, but more likely because they were not actual top artistes of stage or radio when money was in short supply.

All recordings of composers interpreting their own music are important, even though others may be better performers, for "it is often the only way to hear them as written" says Mr. Peter Gammond in his notes.

Another excellent transfer from 78's to lp by the Chris Ellis-Peter Brown team.

World Records SH 273

ARTHUR SCHWARTZ The great British Dance Bands play his music.

This is a great tribute to a composer who started life as a lawyer and had his first big successes musically around 1928, but still keeps his hand in at law by helping ASCAP. Some of his hits were first heard in London before New York for he seems to divide his time between those two cities. His first London show was "Here comes the Bride" in 1930, followed by "The Band Wagon".

The recordings are arranged chronologically, spanning 1930 - 1936, and are played by the bands of Jack Hylton, Carroll Gibbons, Ambrose, Debroy Somers Billy Cotton, Jack Jackson, Ray Noble, Harry Roy and Henry Hall. All have been cleanly transferred to lp.

The songs I remember most are "Dancing in the Dark", sung here by Jack Plant (though I still prefer Bing Crosby's early version); "Louisiana Hayride" played by Billy Cotton helped along by Alan Breeze's impeccable diction; "You & the night and the music" by Harry Roy with vocal by Ivor Moreton who was as good a vocalist as pianist; "Got a bran' new suit" by Henry Hall with that perennial Scot George Elrick singing.

Other tunes which I recalled upon hearing them again were "Love is a dancing thing" played here by Henry Hall and "I guess I'll have to change my plan" by Ambrose with Sam Browne.

Then I also like the Debroy Somers medley of the tunes "With you here and me here" and "Twixt the devil and the deep blue sea" with vocals delightfully

sung by an unknown ? whom perhaps someone might recognise. Al Bowlly adds his contribution in "She loves me not" and "After all, you're all I'm after".

Although the personnels are not listed upon the sleeve, the matrices and recording dates are there so it should not take long to find the information if required. Overall, a very enjoyable reissue. Very well transferred to lp.

World Records SH 274

A TREASURY OF SAM COSLOW SONGS

Various artistes have been selected to salute another composer of light songs, all stars in their own right.

Ethel Waters lends her talent to "True Blue Lou" and obviously enjoys singing "Do I know what I'm doing?" and Smith Ballew's orchestra with unknown girl singer play "In my little hope chest". Two of Coslow's songs are mostly remembered by their Bing Crosby versions because they are mostly played on the radio these days, but included here are the recordings by Victor Young's orchestra featuring Scrappy Lambert as very able vocalist and Bunny Berrigan (we assume) as trumpet soloist, for "Thanks" and "The day you came along."

Duke Ellington's orchestra play the lively "Sing you sinners" (of which the words express an opinion opposed to that of the Puritans!) and the often under-rated Connie Boswell sings a sensitive version of "In the middle of a kiss", and presumably the accompaniment is also led by Victor Young, from 1935.

One of Annette Hanshaw's better recordings is "Daddy won't you please come home" with accompaniment of the New Englanders, who seem to be friends of Jimmy Dorsey. Often mishandled, but here in fine version is "Cocktails for Two" sung by the handsome Carl Brisson.

The compilation is rounded off by salutes from Dorothy Lamour, Gene Krupa and Benny Goodman, the latter two in restrained mood! Helen Forrest is the vocalist with Goodman.

A very interesting and enjoyable salute to Sam Coslow, transferred from the originals without tampering, other than hiss-removal... but this does mean that a few sound "muddy" & thick in the middle bass having come from Brunswicks which suffered from this ailment. There are no sleeve notes - but who plays the sleeves? It would have been nice to have the names of vocalists under the band names and at least the year of recording to show some progression of the composer. All details are available in one or other of Brian Rust's books.

Nostalgia Book Club P 14302

THE YOUNG IRVING BERLIN

Irving Berlin is the title of a living legend which I shall not retell here. So, on with the music! The recordings reissued date from 1912 to 1921 and are played/sung by artistes of the day.

Gottlieb's Orchestra starts us off with "Alexander's Ragtime Band", and, going back a couple of years comes "My Wife's gone to the country". I have had this for years as a wax cylinder sung by Edward M. Favor without knowing it to be a Berlin song, as I have had "Snooky Ookums". Here it is sung by Lew Hearn & Bonita, who like The American Ragtime Octette who came to Britain to star in Albert de Courville's shows featuring Ragtime. The Octette sing a Berlin - Ted Snyder song "I want to be in Dixie", and Harry Fay sings their joint "Mysterious Rag" as well as "Everybody's Doing It".

"The Light Opera Company" recorded a generous selection of "Follow the Crowd" songs in 1916. Hearing their trained voices enhance the songs, one wishes that they had been used more by dance bands for this company seems to be composed of Bessie Jones, George Baker, Ernest Pike - and could the contralto be Edna Thornton? Similarly Peter Dawson (alias Will Strong) works wonders with "After you get what you want".

Other great stars heard are Beatrice Lillie in "Someone else may be there" and G. H. Elliott is well-suited for "When the Midnight Choo-choo leaves for Alabam".

Mr. Murray Johnson, (alias Stanley Kirkby) sings "This is the life" and "I want to go back to Michigan". Two names new to me Tom & Georgie Temple sing "At the Devil's Ball". Are these real names or pseudonyms? Of the next duetists I know of Bob Roberts but not his companion Charles Manny. They sing "International Rag".

Although different from the music of Berlin mostly heard today, this is an important reissue giving us tunes showing Berlin writing in the contemporary style of some sixty years ago played in the fashion that they were introduced. Saying "historically important for students of Irving Berlin" does not infer archaism, many of them are enjoyable numbers which you will go about whistling. Very well transferred to lp by Messrs Ellis & Brown.

World Records SH 275

BENNY GOODMAN Legendary Performer.

The title of the record is true and so is the information and pictures in the booklet which comes in the sleeve. But such a false tone has been put on to this lp transfer that it can only be called ghastly. I hope that Mr. Goodman has instituted criminal proceedings against the person(s) responsible. To be polite, I was exceedingly disappointed. RCA PL 12470.

WOODY GUTHRIE Legendary Performer

John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath" is an indictment of careless soil erosion and resultant exploitation of the poor, especially during the migration of displaced persons to places like California. Authorities in reception areas became a little suspicious and nervous, made worse by the dishonest among the migrants. The honest of them were in fear, despair and wonderment.

This scene inspired Woody Guthrie's "Dust Bowl Ballads". The work of this important folk singer will be well-known to the initiates of folksong.

Quoting the notes by Dr. Guy Logsdon, "Woody Guthrie was politically an idealist and a humanist, he wanted a perfect world of honest work, adequate compensation, justice and dignity". This all comes through in his own songs and choice of the material of others.

The songs on this record were all recorded on 26th. April, 1940, and keep the dust storms of April, 1935 as a central theme. These have been beautifully transferred to lp by Eddie Rich and I thoroughly recommend the reissue to folk song enthusiasts. You ought to listen to other types of Woody Guthrie's work as well, it puts this one in perspective.

RCA PL 12099

NELSON EDDY & JEANNETTE MacDonald legendary performers.

Like the Benny Goodman, back we go to the horrifying experience of hearing the voices of the two singers' voices distorted down the echoing St. Gothard Tunnel. There are seven songs/duets from the 1935/6 period two from 1946/47. Adding to the gimmickry, in stereo, one channel is stifled and the other made shrill. It does not end there. When a violin or string quartet play alone, an almost original 78 rpm tone is used. Side two is mostly from the 1957/58 sessions, which have been hawked around previously in another combination. These latter sessions should never have been made. They show that the legends were a bit past it. It is unfortunate that this record spoils the market for a proper reissue of the Eddy & MacDonald records. Again, I am very disappointed.

RCA PL 124468

I would warn you that there is a John McCormack record in this "Legendary Performers" series. Whether it is excellent like the Woody Guthrie, or ghastly you would be advised to find out before parting with your money.

I will confess that the next two records did not start their lives as 78 rpm discs, but their principal performers began in that fashion. It is interesting to hear what they are doing now.

ARTHUR FIEDLER & The Boston Pops Orchestra play waltzes by the Strauss Family

From the pen of Johann II we hear "Where the citrons bloom", "1001 nights", "Roses from the south". From Eduard we hear "Doctrines" and from Josef it is "Secret attractions", and, "Music of the Spheres". Originally issued in 1971 this record has been given a new lease of life. It is a most pleasant experience. As Mr. Rudolph Elie's sleeve note says "Forget the formal structure of the music, and instead let ourselves be seduced by the yielding, and lilting, swinging and soaring magic of the waltz." How right he is when it is conducted by Arthur Fiedler. If you can play lp records, this is a good point to introduce some Strauss music into your collection inexpensively.

Camden CDS 1085, distributed by Pickwick International.

RAY CONNIFF with his orchestra, chorus

I may be mis-informed, but I can see no connection between the bikini clad girl on the sleeve and Mr. Ray Conniff who was heard on 78's as a member of various big bands. Have no fears, this is all perfectly relaxed, in fact the orchestra is mostly in the background. We hear it gently in "Stranger in Paradise" and more virilely in "Granada", "Brazil", "Dank Schön" and "Besame Mucho". All of the other tunes mainly feature the choir. A pleasant record overall, but I feel that the drums and guitar are too prominently recorded and become aggravating after a while, emphasising as they do the "off-beat". I prefer the tunes with most orchestra; of the vocal type I like the languorous "Hawaiian Wedding Song". A good record for those who like relaxing.

Hallmark SHM 946, distributed by Pickwick International.

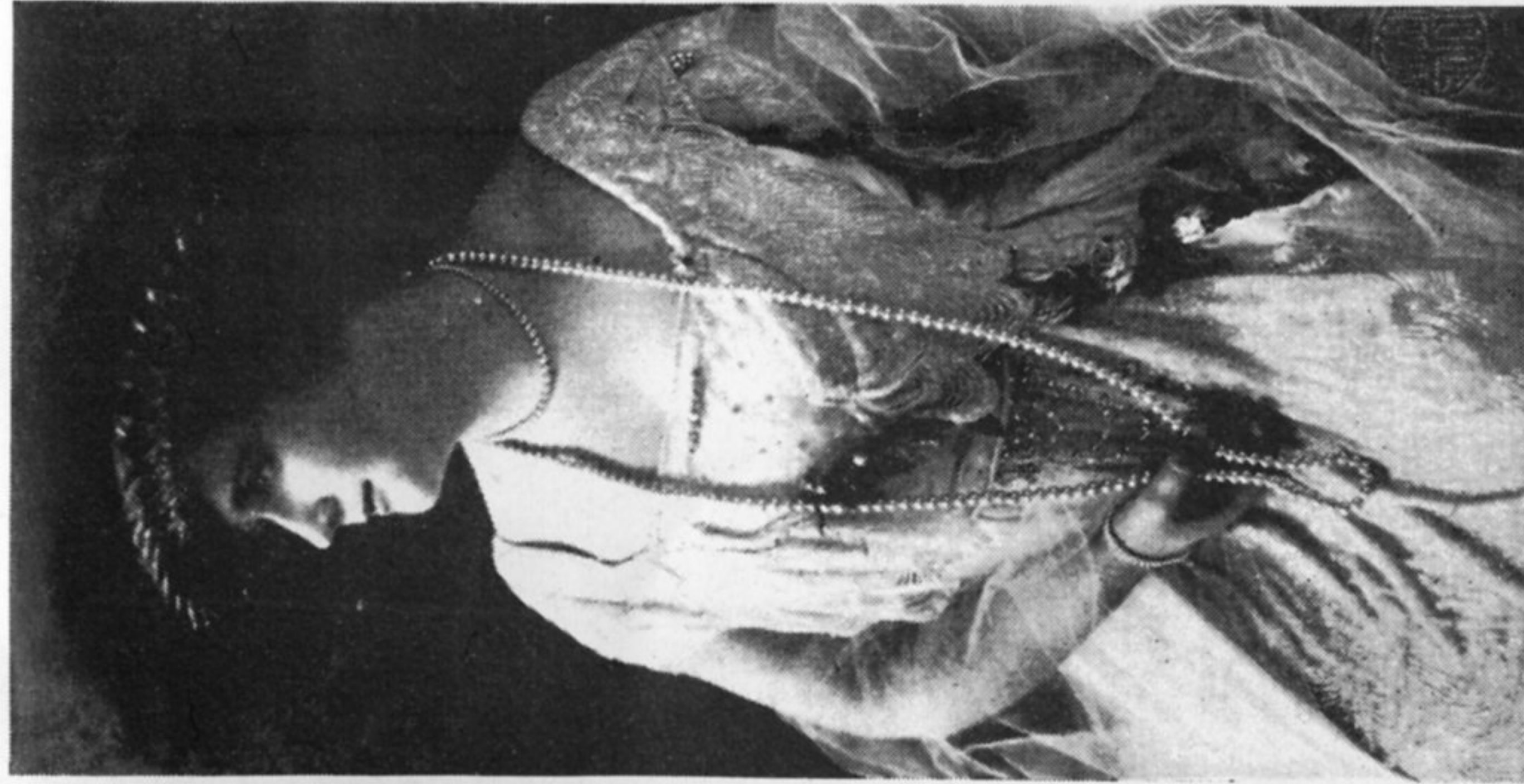
* * * * *

HARRY BLUFF

Singers like Harry Bluff, who were not themselves on the Music Halls should not be lightly dismissed, because among their records are songs by many great artistes that they did not record themselves. Dan Leno is quoted as one in this issue. T. E. Dunville made only six two-minute cylinders despite his importance. James Fawn recorded only one song. This could well be that the top artiste hated the thought of singing down a horn, or was earning sufficient money not to see the need to record. So, "Three Cheers" for men like Harry Bluff. E. B.



Ada Jones
Comedienne



Marie Kaiser
Soprano



Margaret Keyes
Contralto



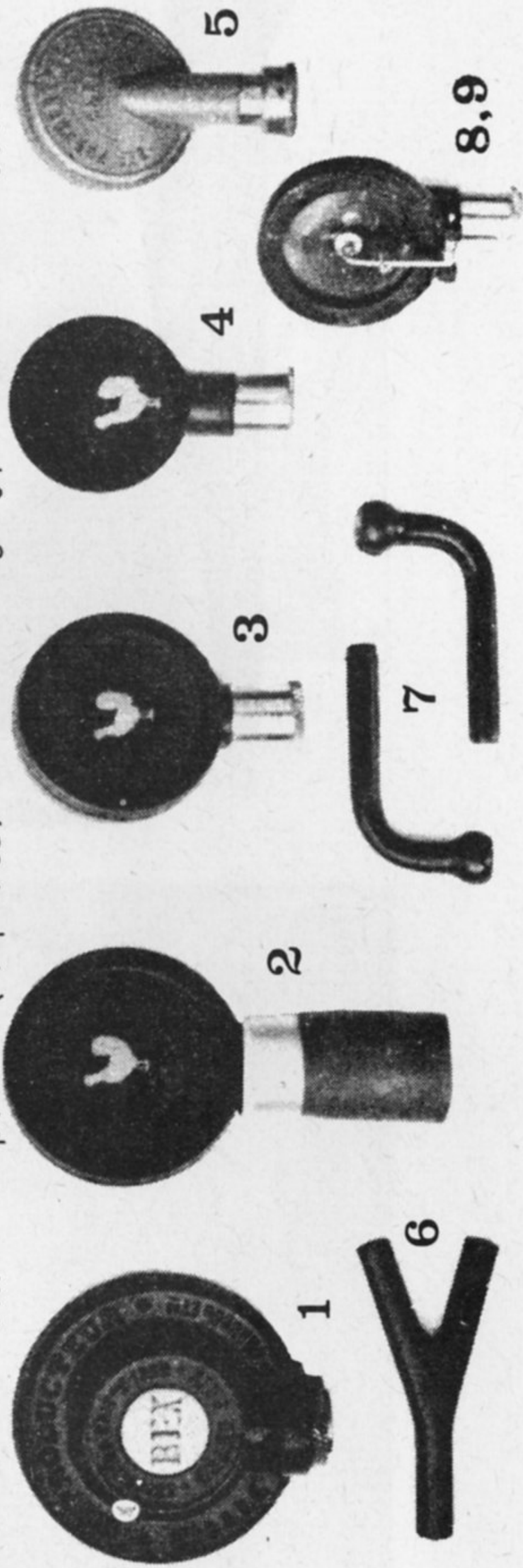
Agnes Kimball
Soprano

BOOKS & REPRINTS

- 1.- MY COLLECTION OF CYLINDER PHONOGRAPHS. A 40 pages book 8½x11 with 35 different machines (14 Edison, 10 Columbia, 11 Pathe). Two pages of unusual cylinder boxes. 100 copies printed, 20 left..... £ 2.50
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- 3.- COLUMBIA CATALOGUE Nov. 1st 1898, 4x5½..... 1.50
- 4.- LA SEMAINE DU CLERGE, Oct. 10 1877. A two pages french article on Charles Cros' invention of phonograph before Edison, with English translation.. 1.00
- 5.- ELECTROTYPES AND HALF TONE CUTS, by Hawthorne & Sheble M'F'G'.Co. Inc. Two 23x34 sheets showing hundreds of photographic items..... 1.00
- 6.- IS YOUR HOME WITHOUT MUSIC? A 3½x6 card showing Edison portrait and signature in brown. A Home phonograph on reverse..... 0.25
- 7.- 4 FRENCH POSTCARD of Pathe cylinder machines. 2 for Xmas & New Year.... 1.00
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- 2.- PATHE REPRODUCER for floating type Pathe horn, with golden rooster..... 12.50
- 3.- PATHE REPRODUCER for "Eagle" type, with golden rooster..... 12.50
- 4.- PATHE RECORDER, with golden rooster painted on it..... 10.00
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- 8.- COLUMBIA REPRODUCER, black resin for early graphophone to type A..... 15.00
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- 10.- PATHE HORN, 12x12½ long spun aluminium..... 10.00
- 11.- PATHE SUPPORT. Complete (4 parts) for floating type Pathe horn 15.00





George L. Thompson
Comedian



Nevada Van der Veer
Contralto



Henriette Wakefield
Contralto



Toots Paka
Hawaiian Music



George P. Watson
Yodler



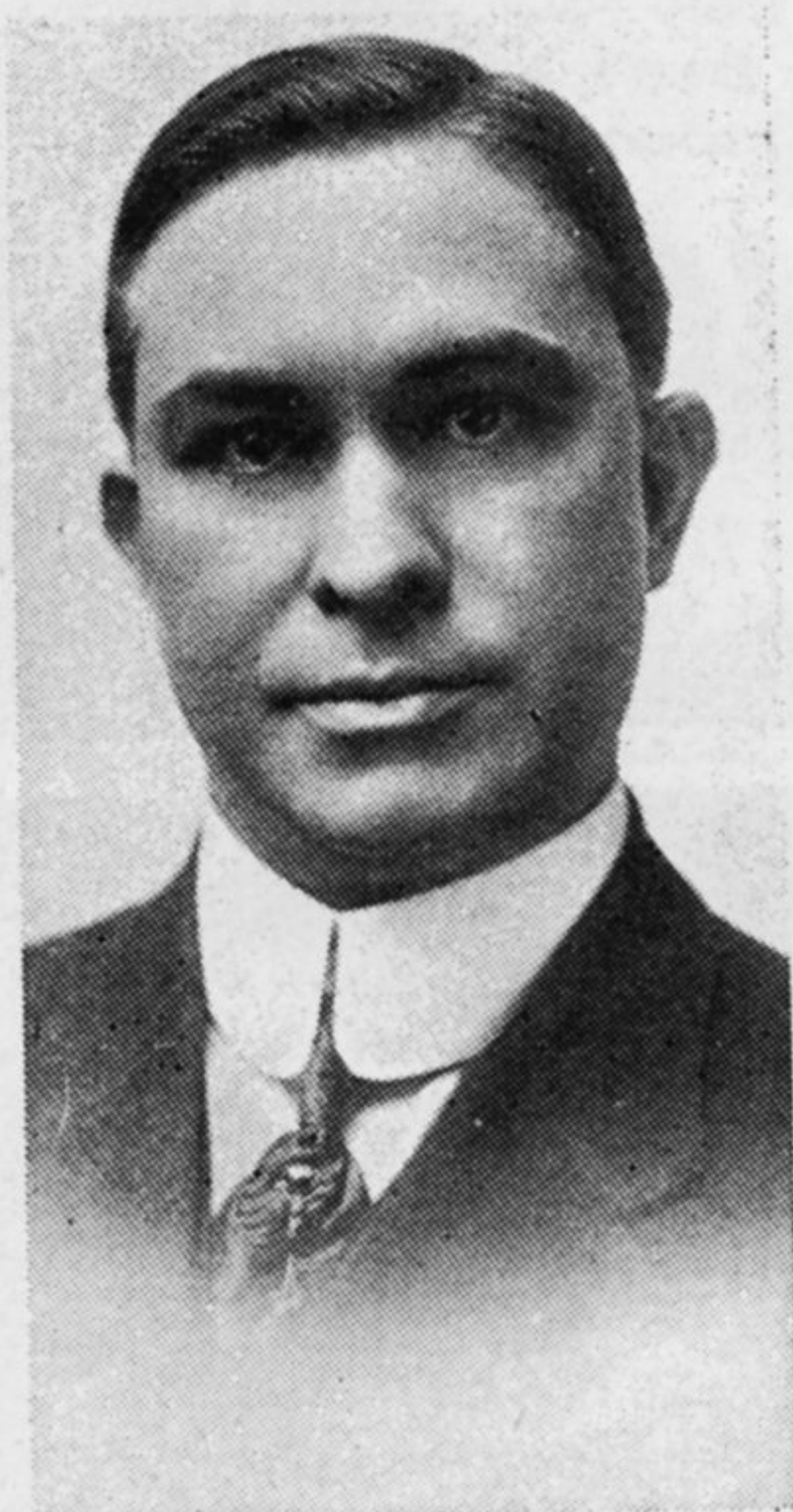
Anton Weiss
Fluegelhorn



William Whittaker
Tenor



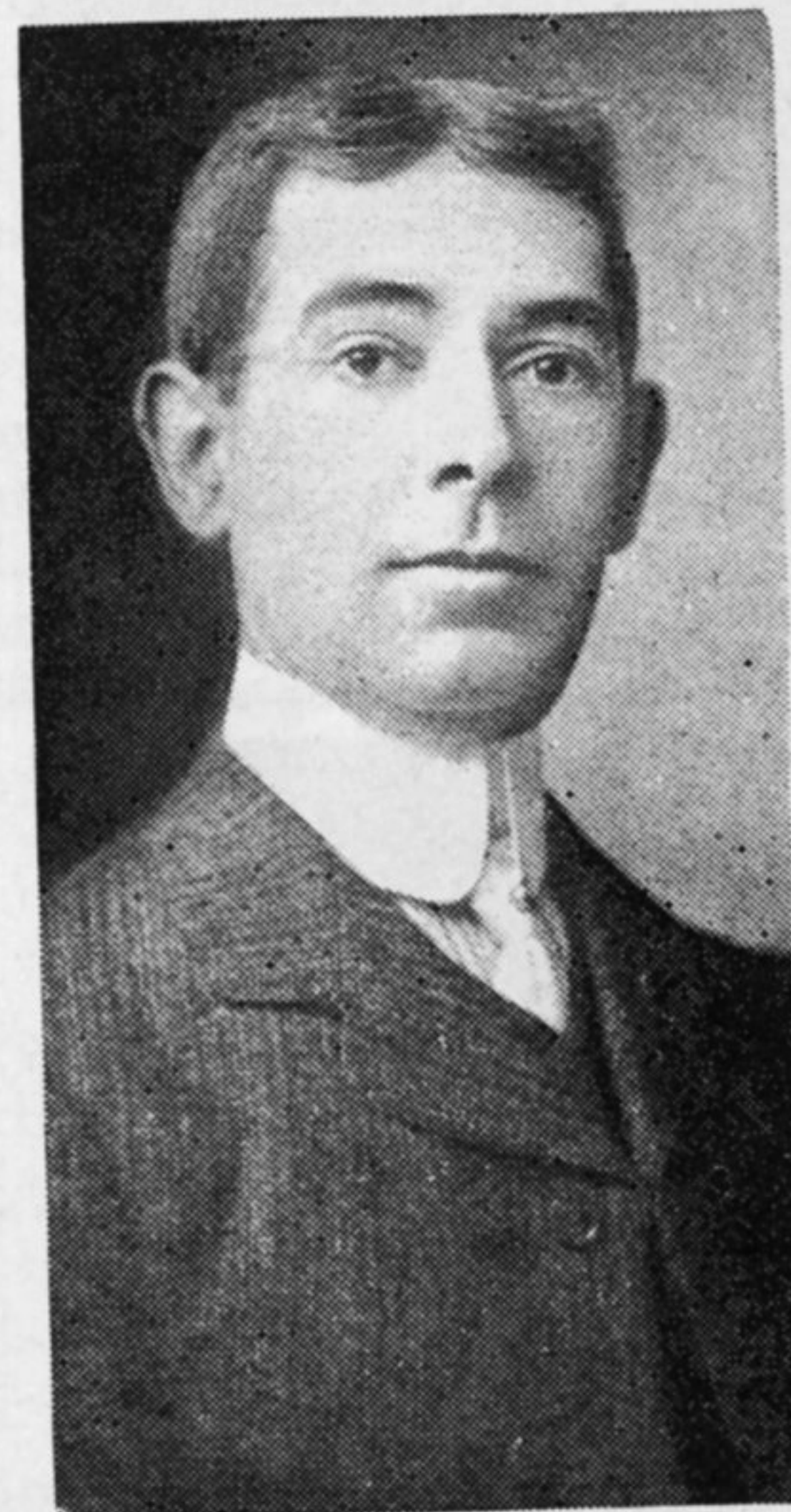
Homer Rodeheaver
Baritone



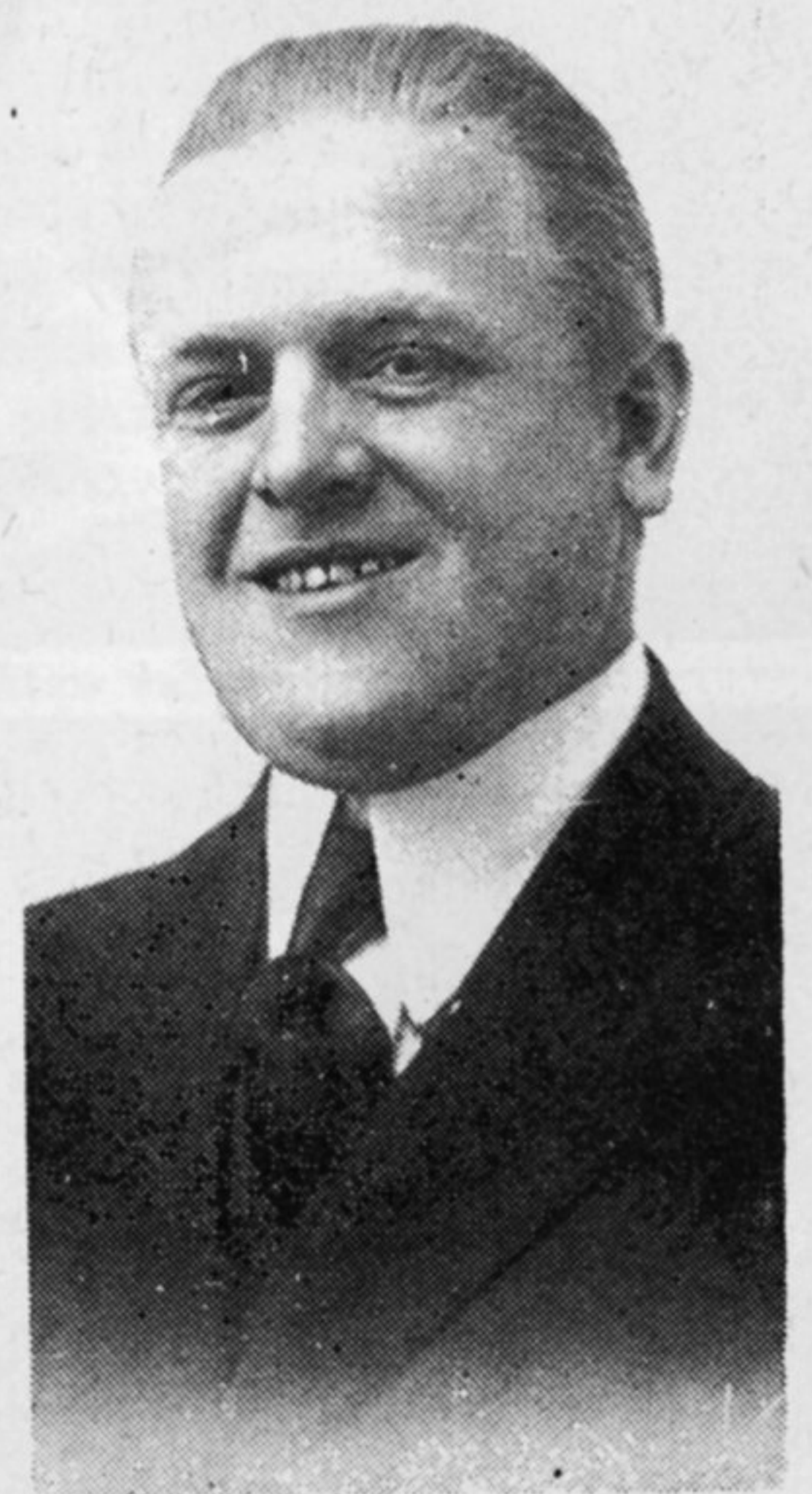
Manuel Romain
Tenor



John Smallman
Baritone



Steve Porter
Comedian



Harold Proctor
Tenor



Oscar Stolberg
Comedian



Bruno Steindl
Violoncello



Wm. A. Rhodes
Tenor



William Smith
Hawaiian Guitar



Tollefsen Trio
Piano, Violin and Violoncello



Marie Zentay
Violin



Arthur Walsh
Violin



Julius Spindler
Flute



Oberammergauer Zither Trio



Philip B. Wolfram
Baritone



Paul Althouse
Tenor

Young American concert and operatic tenor of considerable fame. Formerly with the New York Symphony Orchestra under Walter Damrosch, and later a member of the Metropolitan Opera Company.



Irving Kaufman
Tenor



Hans Kronold
Violoncello